



CHILD PROTECTION

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

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Webinar Series: 1

The why's and how's of creating child protection policies

- This webinar will explore the benefits of organizations' developing or strengthening their child protection policies or child safeguarding policies.
- But first, what are we talking about?
- Child safeguarding: “the responsibility that organizations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programs do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organization has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.” (Keeping Children Safe, 2014)



A child protection or child safeguarding policy

- A child protection policy is a written policy that lays out an organization's commitment to preventing and responding appropriately to harm to children. It should:
 - Express the philosophy of your organization
 - Recognize the needs of all children to be protected
 - Apply to all staff, volunteers and associates at all times
 - Identify and manage risk
 - Integrate safeguarding measures into all areas of the organization

Keeping Children Safe, 2014

Feature number 1: Have a policy!

- It is beneficial for all organizations serving children to have a written policy. Why?
 - Creates opportunity for discussion and decision-making about how the organization will react to child protection concerns;
 - Makes clear for staff, volunteers, and others how they should act and react in certain situations;
 - Protects the organization and the children that it is serving.



Feature 2: Think through all of the bases

1. Personnel Recruitment
2. Education and Training
3. Management Structure
4. Behavior Protocols
5. Communication Guidelines
6. Reporting and Reaction Protocols
7. Ramifications of Misconduct



Feature number 3: Make decisions about the scope of your policy.

- The Keeping Children Safe Toolkit offers recommended features of a child safeguarding policy.
- There are some key decisions that you will need to make as you develop or revise your own.





Decisions to consider

Who does your policy apply to?

- At a minimum, the policy should apply to all staff members, volunteers, and others with whom the organization is putting children in contact.
- What reactions is your organization required to provide when it faces or encounters child abuse? What are you willing / able to take on?
 - Mandatory reporting by certain actors is not required in many countries, but that doesn't mean that children don't still need help

Make your way through decisions strategically

- There are a number of toolkits specifically geared toward designing or revising your child protection or child safeguarding policy.
- Follow a structured process within your organization so that are you talking to people at all levels about this important topic.



Feature 4: Communicate, communicate, communicate



- Although it is called a “policy,” your child protection policy should be anything but dry and dusty. It should be alive and active, informing how your staff, volunteers, and affiliates interact with children.
 1. Leaders within the organization must make it known that this is a priority.
 2. The policy should be disseminated in written and other forms at all levels, including children.
 3. Training must occur.

Feature 5: Reporting and referral pathways

We are hearing a lot about “case management” these days in international child protection.

- A tool that social service workers can use to coordinate service access for individuals
- “a multi-step process to ensure timely access to and coordination of medical and psychosocial services for a person...and, in some models, his or her family/close support system. Case management includes the following processes: intake, assessment of needs, service planning, service plan implementation, service coordination, monitoring and follow-up, reassessment, case conferencing, crisis intervention, and case closure.”

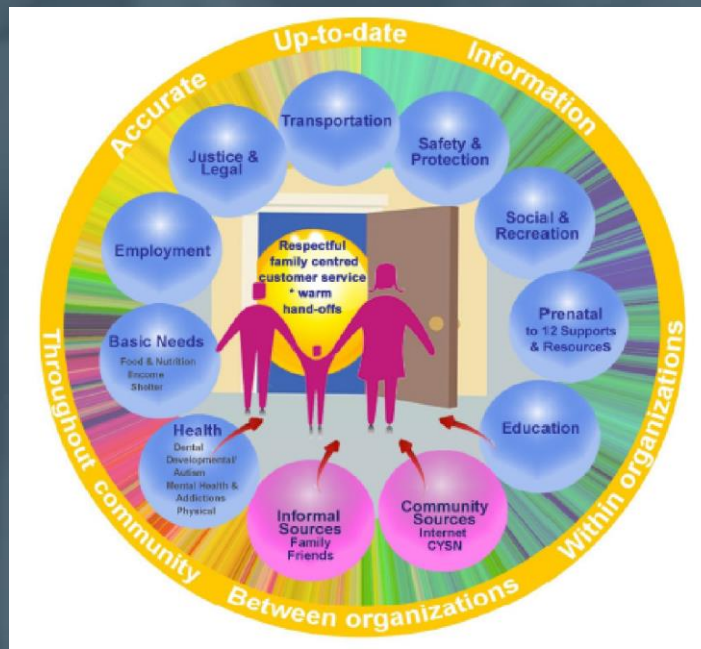
A key decision point

Is your organization mandated to and capable of undertaking case management with the children that you are serving or others who may come to your attention through application of the child safeguarding policy?

- What are your legal requirements?
- Access to medical, legal, psychosocial, housing, and other services?
- How do you assess quality?

Referral pathways

At a minimum, you need to know to whom your organization can refer children who have been subject to child abuse and neglect. It also needs to be clear who should do such reporting.



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