



GOODPUSH

This is a quick guide to prepare you for introducing a child protection policy at your social skateboarding organization.

CHILD PROTECTION – QUICK GUIDE

Introduction

The best practice in child protection is to always make *child safety* the center of all your activities and programs. Having a written child protection policy (CPP) is a good start but *implementation* – carrying out the policy in real life – is what will really make your organization child safe. Implementation is also not complete without empowering the children in your programs.

1. Purpose

Stating the purpose of your CPP at the very beginning is very important. A clear purpose makes it easy to explain what the policy is and why it's important to your staff, volunteers and the children you work with. An example purpose statement is:

“The purpose of this policy is to promote and protect the interests of the children that **(name of your organization)** works with, and to offer children a safe and welcoming environment. This policy applies to our own organization's activities and any work we do in partnership with other organizations.”

2. Aims

The aims for your child protection policy should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. A good way to develop the aims is to have a discussion with your team members and come up with practical examples of how a child protection policy would help to make your activities safer – then decide together on 3-5 aims to include in your CPP.

Some examples of aims for your CPP could include:

- To provide an environment for skateboarding where all children feel safe
- To prevent child abuse throughout the organization
- To provide clear guidelines to staff/volunteers/partners on how to manage a child safety incident
- To enable children to express themselves

3. Guidelines

The best child protection policy has guidelines included on key risk areas for an organization working with children. These guidelines should be widely available to all staff/volunteers and easy to understand. Guidelines help you implement the policy in its true spirit. Some of the key guidelines which will help in becoming a child safe organization are:

- Safety in the skatepark
- Communication and social media
- Medical emergency
- Interaction with children
- Do's and Don'ts

4. Consent

The child protection policy should include instructions on getting

consent from parents/guardians for children to take part in your activities, with links to relevant consent forms. At a minimum, these should include:

- Parent/guardian consent to join skateboarding classes
- Media consent (including photography and social media posting)

5. Recruitment

As a child safe organization, you should take a lot of time to hire the right people and make sure that anyone you bring on board has no history of abusing children. This is important for both staff and volunteers. Here are some examples that you could include in your CPP and enforce:

- Requiring every new staff/volunteer to provide a police clearance certificate
- Making sure your job advertisements say you have a child protection policy which all staff/volunteers must sign on to
- Asking questions related to child safety during interviews

“Every child matters”

6. Incident reporting

To make your CPP a practical tool for ensuring child safety, it is important that your CPP include:

- Clear instructions of what staff/volunteers/partners should do in case of child abuse or injury.
- Information on where to find your “Accident / Incident Report Form” and who should fill this out
- Instructions on protecting child privacy by recording and storing information in a secure place that only authorized people have access to.

7. Involve children in the process

Children should be consulted during the process of creating your child protection policy, and should be given clear information on their rights and what to do if they feel unsafe. Empower children to speak up and talk to someone who they trust. Some of the tools which will help in empower children are:

Posters about Child Safety:

Hang posters with simple child safety messages in a location that children can see them. Ensure these are culturally appropriate and as visual as possible in case children have low literacy. You can also involve children in designing these themselves by talking to them about what they think about child safety and asking them to draw it.

Emergency and police contact numbers:

Make sure these numbers are visible and that children know who/when to call in case of emergency and danger. Also provide information on external services, if possible, such as abuse or suicide hotlines.

8. Staff training and signature

Doing regular staff training on child protection is the most important aspect of having a successful child protection policy. New staff/volunteers should have the CPP explained and all staff/volunteers should be trained annually as a refresher. In addition, encourage your staff to attend external trainings on child protection, (such as Goodpush webinars!).

Lastly, it should be mandatory for all staff/volunteers to sign a declaration that they have understood the CPP and will abide by the policy, before they begin their position with your organization.

