

**ACCOMPANYING ADULT GUIDELINES
FOR THE "PREPARATION FORUM" AND
THE "WORLD CONGRESS III AGAINST
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS"**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
23rd -28th November, 2008

Accompanying Adult Guidelines

Minimum standards that help and protect children and adolescents are being applied to these international meetings. They are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and on four key principles of children's participation:

- **An ethical approach: transparency, honesty and accountability.** Adults involved in these international meetings will follow ethical and participatory practice and put children and adolescents best interests first.
- **A child and adolescent friendly environment.** Children and adolescents experience a safe, welcoming and encouraging environment that enables participation of all.
- **Equality of opportunity.** Child and adolescent participation work will encourage those groups of children and adolescents who normally suffer discrimination and who are normally excluded from activities to be involved in the process.
- **Participation promotes the safety and protection of children and adolescents.** Child and adolescents protection policies and procedures form an essential part of participatory work.

YOUR ROLE AS AN ACCOMPANYING ADULT

You have been selected by a sponsoring agency to accompany a child and/or adolescent to the "Preparation Forum" and the "World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents" that will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 23rd -28th November, 2008. Accompanying adults play an important role in taking the primary responsibility for the safety and welfare of the children and adolescents in their care **at all times**.

These responsibilities of the accompanying adult start from the time when the children and adolescents leave their parent/carers to travel and only ends when they are safely handed over to their parent/carer on their return. The way in which accompanying adults take care of children and adolescents should be appropriate to their age and maturity.

Responsibilities include:

1. Supporting the children and adolescents during travel to and from the meetings including transport to the airport, providing support at customs/immigration, check-in, boarding the plane, travel to your hotel, local travel and for other meetings, excursions etc.
2. Ensuring that all children and adolescents have emergency phone numbers (for example, the embassy or consulate of their home country) on them at all times during travel. Accompanying adults should give orientations on how to use phones in different cities visited (including any transit country) and children and adolescents should also be given phone cards or adequate cash to ensure they have an independent means to call their embassy or consulate if they have a problem during travel.
3. Informing about and explaining the role of the Child Protection Focal Person at the meeting to children and adolescents, as well as the formal complaint procedure for the meetings.

4. Being physically near the children and adolescents and aware of their whereabouts at **all times**.
5. Being aware of the children and adolescents physical and emotional needs and assisting in meeting those needs as appropriate or make every effort to meet those needs in meetings with the organisers and other participants.
6. Making sure that the children and adolescents are able to communicate with other groups of children and adolescents. In some cases accompanying adults may also have to act as interpreters for the children and adolescents during the meetings. If this is the case, we request that you also read the Guidelines for Translators.
7. Acting as a translator so that children and adolescents have the opportunity to participate in discussions and activities outside the meeting (in the mornings before the meeting, after the meeting, during leisure activities and so on).
8. Administering correct medication and dosage to children and adolescents when necessary.
9. Liaising closely with the Child Protection Focal Person to keep the meeting organisers informed of any difficulties that children and adolescents might be experiencing.
10. Giving children and adolescents any other physical and emotional support that they might need. Accompanying adults should keep copies of the children and adolescents consent forms/medical history forms with them at all times (which include written permission from their parents/carers to act on their behalf for medical emergencies).
11. Supporting children and adolescents to take the best possible advantage of the opportunities available.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A key element in working to safeguard the welfare of all children and adolescents is the promotion of their rights. A Child Protection Policy has been developed for the “Preparation Forum’ and the “World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents”. Accompanying adults are expected to adhere to and promote this Policy. Keeping in mind the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children and adolescents at these meetings have the right:

- To have their health, safety and well-being, and their best interest considered as **the top priority**.
- To have their welfare and development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential.
- To be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity, and to have their needs identified and met within this context and within the context of their family wherever possible.
- To be listened to and to have their views given careful consideration, and to be encouraged and helped to participate in decisions which affect them.

In order that these rights are respected, when accompanying adults, facilitators and adult support workers are in contact with young people, they should:

- At all times treat children and adolescents with respect and recognise them as individuals in their own rights.

- View children and adolescents in a positive manner and value children and adolescents as individuals who have specific needs and rights and a particular contribution to make.
- Work with them in spirit of co-operation and partnership based on mutual trust and respect.
- Value children and adolescents views and take them seriously.
- Work with children and adolescents in ways that enhance their natural capacities and capabilities, and that develop their potential.
- Do their best to understand children and adolescents within the context in which they live.

DUTY OF CARE

In addition to the general principles of good practice in work with children and adolescents, accompanying adults have the responsibility and legal duty to ensure the children and adolescents safety while they are away from home.

Children and adolescents can be at risk of harm or abuse from different sources. The accompanying adult is responsible for minimising the risk of being harmed by promoting good practice and by identifying and managing potential risks.

Any child protection concerns and complaints should be reported to the Child Protection Focal Persons that will handle them in the strictest confidence and ensure that they are properly dealt with and responded to.

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is important for accompanying adults to:

- Be aware of situations, which may present risks and take the appropriate action.
- Make sure that a culture of openness exists between the accompanying adults and children and adolescents so that it is possible for the accompanying adult to raise and discuss any issues or concerns that children and adolescents may have.
- Make sure that there is a sense of accountability with other adults so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.

In general it is **inappropriate** for an accompanying adult to:

- Spend excessive time alone with any child and/or adolescent, away from other people.
- Take a child and/or adolescent to places where they will be alone together.

Adults and children at the meetings **must never**:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically/ psychologically abuse the children and/or adolescents.
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with any child and/or adolescent.
- Develop relationships with any child and/or adolescent who could in any way be seen as exploitative or abusive.
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child and/or adolescent at risk of abuse.
- Use language or gestures, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive, abusive or exploitative.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.

- Have a child and/or adolescent stay overnight in the adult's room (* unless this has been previously agreed with both of the child and/or adolescents Parent/Carer) or sleep in the same bed as any child and/or adolescent.**
- Do things for a child and/or adolescent of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children and/or adolescents which is illegal, unsafe and abusive.
- Act in ways meant to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children and adolescents, or otherwise commit any form of emotional abuse.
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour a particular child and/or adolescent to the exclusion of others.

PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL INFORMATION: Guidelines for adults (*Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 17e*)

Children and adolescents have the right to be protected from any information they do not need to know and for which they may not have the understanding and maturity to cope. This is especially true if the information deals with sexual matters. All adults at the World Congress have a duty to ensure that no child is harmed as a result of information from presentations and discussions whether in spoken, written or visual form or any other kind of communication.

This means:

- No shocking/offensive stories or case studies
- No shocking images
- No emotional personal testimony of abuse and exploitation
- No role play or drama depicting rape or other sexual or violent acts
- Sensitivity to other cultures
- No 'bad' (improper/offensive) language

All adults should be alert to such situations and are responsible for protecting all children and adolescents attending the WC III. Facilitators in particular must be prepared to stop discussions or presentations that are inappropriate and remind participants that;

- Child protection is mandatory
- Activities must remain within professional limits
- Time out may be necessary.

Anyone (child or adult) who feels uncomfortable or needs a break from a presentation or discussion can leave. There will be a quiet place for reflection available at the meeting venue with a supportive counsellor if needed.

Further, Accompanying adults, facilitators and adult support workers must avoid actions or behaviour that could be seen as poor practice or potentially abusive.

- Children and adolescents should also be briefed about child protection issues.
- Children and adolescents should be made aware that she/he is also free to contact any other adult present at the workshop should they have any questions or if their accompanying adult is not available or appropriate.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In the event of any emergency situation, parents/carer of children and adolescents will be contacted immediately. In addition, contact will be made with any relevant authority within the home country to inform them and, where relevant, to negotiate the safe return home of the child and/or adolescent.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a medical emergency, immediate medical help will be sought. The safety of all children and adolescents is paramount and all necessary action will be taken to ensure this. Accompanying adults are reminded that they must keep copies of the consent forms/medical history of the children and adolescents in their care with them at all times.

CHILD PROTECTION

In the event of significant harm, or the risk of significant harm to any child and/or adolescent, protective procedures developed for the meetings will be followed and contact will be made with the appropriate local authorities.

***There will be a child protection briefing for all accompanying adults at the beginning of the 'Preparatory Forum'.**

**** The Children and Adolescent Participation Commission, comprising ECPAT, PLAN International, Save the Children, UNICEF and the government of Brazil, strongly advises that adults are not permitted to sleep in the same room or bed as a young person. We understand that in some cases young people may agree to share a room with their Accompanying Adult. In such cases we strongly recommend that, prior to travelling, the supporting organisation ensures that written and signed agreement from the child/adolescent and his/her guardian(s) is obtained. With the previously agreed permission of children and adolescents and their guardians/parents/carers children and adolescents may share rooms with other children and adolescents of the same gender.**