



LSU Policy Child Safeguarding Plan

September 2023

CHILD SAFEGUARDING PLAN FOR SAFE AND SECURE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

LSU –the national council of Swedish children’s and youth organizations is an interest and cooperation organization that brings together national children’s and youth organizations. Our task is to strengthen the democratic organization of young people with human rights as a starting point. We are party-politically and religiously unbound organization.

One of the absolute fundamentals we have to ensure is that our activities are safe and secure for children. We are firmly determined to do everything in our power to ensure that every child in our activities feels safe. Child Safeguarding means that we have a set of internal policies, procedures and practices to ensure that LSU provides safe and secure operations for children.

This policy is a complement to LSU’s Ethical Guidelines, and covers LSU’s responsibility for protecting all children in our activities from all forms of injury, abuse and exploitation.

Fundamental values

LSU shall be a safe and secure organisation for children. We have zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, violation, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation of children, and do not accept any behaviour that breaches this policy.

LSU is strongly committed to children’s right to freedom from all forms of violation, violence, abuse and exploitation, and our basic philosophy is that:

- a child is any person under the age of 18
- all children are of equal value and have the same rights, and must never be discriminated against, irrespective of the child’s or parent/guardian’s skin colour; gender, gender identity or gender expression; language; religion; political or other views; national, ethnic or social origin; property; functional variation; sexual orientation; civil or other status
- all children have a right to freedom from discrimination, violation, violence, injury, sexual abuse and exploitation

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- LSU has an obligation to ensure that all our staff and all our representatives, apply best possible practice in their behaviour towards children in both their professional and private lives.

Definition of abuse of children

LSU uses the definitions of child abuse drawn up by the Swedish Committee on Child Abuse in 2001.

Physical abuse: The act in which a person causes a child physical injury, illness or pain, or subjects the child to neglect or similar. This may involve the person hitting the child with or without an implement, pinching, kicking, pushing, throwing, shaking, pulling the child's hair, scratching or biting the child, stepping or stamping on the child, or forcing objects into the child's mouth. Physical abuse also includes poisoning, burning, scalding, scratching, and trying to drown or suffocate the child. Any form of corporal punishment is considered physical abuse of children.

Psychological abuse: Psychological abuse includes severe punishment, ridicule, criticism, mockery, disparagement, rejection, freezing out, unreasonable demands, forced isolation from social contacts and age-appropriate activities, and constant refusal to listen to what the child has to say. Certain harmful experiences shall also be considered psychological abuse, for example if the child is forced to witness (see or hear) violence in his/her immediate environment or live in an environment where there is frequent violence or threats of violence. All forms of physical abuse of children, including sexual abuse, involve psychological abuse.

Sexual abuse: Covers all forms of sexual acts forced on a child by another person. Sexual abuse means that the other person is exploiting the child's position of dependence, and the act is based on the other person's needs, violates the child's integrity, takes place against the child's will, or is something that the child cannot understand, is not mature enough to undertake or cannot give informed consent to.

Sexual exploitation: Actual or attempted abuse of a child's vulnerable position for sexual purposes based on a position of power or trust. This includes, but is not limited to, promising the child monetary, social or political gain through sexual exploitation.

Sexual abuse online: Covers all forms of sexual abuse, physical and non-physical, forced on a child by another person through the internet.

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Our commitment and responsibilities

All staff and all representatives of LSU are committed:

- to do everything to protect children from injury, discrimination, violation, all forms of physical and psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation
- to treat children as individuals and with respect – irrespective of the child’s or parent/guardian’s skin colour; gender, gender identity or gender expression; language; religion; political or other views; national, ethnic or social origin; property; functional variation; sexual orientation; civil or other status
- to respect a child’s integrity and never compromise his/her physical and/or psychological health
- to respect children’s views and concerns, and give them space to express their views in situations that affect them in ways appropriate to their age and maturity
- never to act with the intention of making children feel guilty, degraded, devalued or shamed, or otherwise expose a child to emotional abuse
- always to treat children fairly and never to discriminate or favour particular children to the detriment of others

All staff and all representatives of LSU have an obligation:

- to act in accordance with this policy in both their professional and private lives
- to sign a Statement of acceptance on employment or engagement to confirm that they have familiarised themselves with and understood the importance of the policy and will act in accordance with it
- to immediately and in accordance with Save the Children Sweden’s reporting procedures⁹ to report suspicions that a child has been exposed to some form of discrimination, injury, violation, physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation
- to know where they should turn with any suspicions of abuse, and make sure that the suspicions are investigated

Reporting

The following section clarifies what is meant by incident reporting, notification of concern or reporting to the police.

All reporting must take place immediately, within 24 hours.

Incident reporting

If there has been a breach of the present policy in our activities, reports are made in and to our own organisation, in accordance with our reporting procedures.

- You see or suspect that a child has been exposed to intentional or unintentional injury, violation, discrimination, some form of physical or psychological violence, sexual abuse or exploitation

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- You receive a report
- A child tells you about violation or abuse

To whom?

Immediate manager or at childsafes@lsu.se

Notification of concern

All staff and all representatives of LSU must act in accordance with this policy in both their professional and private lives. This means that we must act if we find out or are concerned that a child is coming to harm, even if this is not within our own operations. In this case, we do not follow the incident reporting procedure described above, but notify our concern to social services in the municipality where the child lives.

Reporting to the police

If the law has been broken in connection with harm to a child, even if this is not within LSU's own operations, this must be reported to the nearest police station.

What happens next?

LSU will assess and deal with all notifications based on the procedures in place.

All cases of reporting will be handled professionally, in confidence and in the most appropriate way possible. In this context, "in confidence" means that notifications are dealt with by responsible managers or other appropriate persons within the organisation (such as the designated contact persons) before a decision is taken on possibly referring the matter to social services or the police.

Where there is suspicion that a matter is of a criminal nature, it will be reported to the police, provided this does not put the child at risk.

All reports made in confidence will be dealt with in the best interests of the child, whatever the outcome of the investigation.

Responsibility for implementation, compliance, measurement & continuous improvement

The following post(s) have responsibility for implementing and following up the policy within their areas of work:

- Managers

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