

Child protection policy a

The importance of protecting children

The policy of protecting a child is a declaration made by the Eparchial Development Office (EDO) of the targets it seeks to achieve inside its work units in relation to the children; since it thinks that children are the elements forming the home future, and they actually represent the home as a whole. For the home to be balanced, strong, thoughtful, and creative, we should place a system to protect our children from any intervention which may physically, psychologically, mentally, or socially hurt them.

The Eparchial Development (EDO) Office believes that the children rights and care are a vital element; as creating a safe environment for children inside the work units of EDO and that of its partners is among its priorities, for which it will prepare the procedures required for achieving it through raising the awareness via advocacy as well as empowering the children, listening to their points of views, and training as well as others in order to prohibit all kinds of abused against children. In addition, EDO is considered one of the largest organizations which deals with children, and as a great organization, it respects laws and legislations, in pursuant to the provision of Article (10) of the executive regulation No (2075) of the amended Child Law No (126) of the year 2008 which stipulates that: "Each of the organizations working in the field of childhood should abide by establishing policies to protect children inside the place where they are existent from any deliberate offense or unintended harmful practice, and it has to include in its executive regulation the mechanisms, criteria, rules, and procedures of applying such policies". In brief, a child protection aims at enhancing and enforcing child rights as provided for by the UN Convention on the Rights of Child as well as other international agreements and conventions, besides the national laws and legislation.

The right of protection against:

- harm
- negligence
- exploitation
- violence

Definition of protection policy

- 1- Protection policy: it is the tool which reflects and expresses the extent of the Organization compliance with providing a safe environment for children, it is not an aim in itself, it is rather just a tool to protect children wherever they are, along with providing them with a safe environment.

General framework of a child protection policy inside the EDO work units

2- The procedures that are adopted and applied by the educational institutions to protect children and create a safe educational environment; it is an inclusive term describing the philosophies, policies, criteria and guidelines aiming at protecting children from intentional and unintentional harm. Within this framework, the term is particularly applied on the duties fall on the schools and all their staff towards the children who are under their custody.

The main elements of protecting child policy

- The existence of child protection policies which are written and signed by the personnel inside the institution
- Establishing policies which are under implementation
- The prevention of abuse against children
- code of conduct and its content of the proper and improper behavior in relation to dealing with children
- supporting the system of management regarding implementing the standards of protection policies at all levels
- the right of all children to have protection without discrimination
- raising the awareness and spreading the message of keeping children in safe
- training and building the abilities of the employees in charge of the policies of child protection
- presenting support and rehabilitation to children who are victims of violence
- following up and evaluating the criteria
- working with partners to meet with the criteria

Element of applying the child protection policy		
1	Prevention	It includes establishing mechanisms and procedures to protect children inside school and to eliminate the occurrence of abuse or violations against children while their existence inside schools
2	Raising awareness	Through training and building the abilities of the workers and children with respect to the forms and indicators of abuse, protection policies, code of conduct, and the necessity of compliance with them, in addition to raising the awareness of children and their families, reporting mechanisms, the reference person and the way to reach him, and how to present a complaint in case of being abused.

3	Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It includes having clear and known mechanisms to submit complaint to the employees, and the beneficiaries' children, and that they should know the reference person and how to reach him, in addition to ensuring that reporting and investigation should be conducted in a strict confidentiality in order to guarantee the child safety. - Constituting a committee of the office employees for the purpose of forming reference committee to be responsible for receiving, studying, and investigating in the complaints.
4	Response	<p>It involves the procedures which should be taken once a report of complaint is presented, this includes referring the complaint to the relevant official and judicial authorities, providing the immediate assistance to a child, or referring him to the competent authorities, so that they could provide him with the necessary support and rehabilitation.</p>

Stages of approving the protection policies inside EDO

- 1- Defining the meaning of child protection
- 2- the necessary basics
- 3- establishing procedures and policies to protect child
- 4- applying such procedures and policies
- 5- facing the obstacles and challenges
- 6- monitoring and evaluating the policies and procedures of protecting child

The first stage:

In this stage, the definition of child protection policy is explained to be: "an inclusive term describing the philosophies, policies, criteria, guidelines, and procedures aiming at protecting children from intentional and unintentional harm", and therefore the term is applied in particular on the EDO as well as its staff towards the children who are in their custody. This stage also tackles the types of violence (the abuse against children) in terms of self-harm, mistreating of mates, adult mistreatment against children, and social abuse.

This part shows that a child protection policy is: "an announcement of will showing a compliance which protects children from harm, and describes the requirements of child protection. Such announcement participates in ensuring a safe and positive environment for children, along with indicating that the EDO will seriously assume its responsibilities and duties in care.

The second stage:

General framework of a child protection policy inside the EDO work units

In this stage, some of the necessary conditions or basics which should be available in the EDO are discussed before establishing the policies and procedures of child protection, including:

- The work of EDO should be based on child rights contained in the UN International Convention on the Rights of Child.
- The Organization should approve the principle of acquiring the suitable consultancy from the competent authorities in order to avoid taking wrong decisions.
- The employees of EDO should have the feeling that they belong to and own the policies and procedures of child protection so that they could be applied successfully and effectively.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of information inside EDO as well as its affiliated units with which it works, particularly the data of children problems and reports regarding undergoing mistreatment.
- The EDO should have the principle of transparency in order to create a preventive environment which provides protection for children.

The third stage:

This stage addresses how to develop policies and procedures for protecting child, and presents in details its elements which ensure personal employment, education, training, management structure, conduct protocols, communication guidelines, the protocols of reporting and movement, as well as the branches of misconduct. This part recommends the participation of relevant parties in all stages of developing, applying, monitoring, and evaluating the policies and procedures of child protection, the procedures of collaborative discussions in order to reach a consensus on the importance of protecting child inside and outside the Organization.

The fourth stage

This stage focuses on establishing the policies and procedures under implementation, along with protecting child through practicing and response to cases. This stage aims directly at causing the workers as well as those who are dealing with children to have the skills required for developing a movement plan to apply the policy of EDO and its procedures of protecting child, through discussing case studies related to an organizing response to child abuse inside the Organization, identifying the rights and wrong procedures which has been taken, and the lessons learned from this experience. This part also provides a work plan in a form of table, which can be used by the Organizations aiming at protecting a child and monitoring the abuse against him.

The fifth stage

This stage shows how to identify the obstacles and challenges which hinder developing the policies and procedures of child protection; it also approaches the method of responding to them. This part involves a description supported by examples of such obstacles and challenges, including as examples:

- The fear of the volunteer's frustration or the compulsion to deal with the child abuse, or the fear of losing the confidence of team work and their Spontaneity.
- the denial which creates a perfect environment in which abuse increases; it also defeats force and forms a great danger
- the absence of human and financial resources, and depending on volunteering
- the self-satisfaction based on the non-understanding of nature of abuse, as well as the absence of the Organization`s compliance with the program of child protection policy
- the deep - rooted culture which exists, in particular, at the most ancient organizations, or the organizations run by one employee or more at the long term

The sixth stage

The last stage is based on identifying the two definitions of monitoring and evaluating the policies and procedures of child protection, and relies on the importance of verification and monitoring in order to care for implementing the policies and procedures of child protection effectively. Moreover, it calls for the importance of children participation at developing monitoring, and applying the policies and procedures of child protection effectively. The review of work, systematic planning, as well as identifying a problem when emerging and solving it are all considered among the good systems of the monitoring processes. In addition, this part concentrates on the significance of using indicators as a foundation to measure the extent of progress achieved in relation to applying the programs or initiatives of child protection.

Protection policy and code of conduct

The policy text: the document of child protection policy should include the following:

First: the aim of the policy

Second: the scope of protection and situations of risk

Third: procedures and measures

Fourth: mechanisms of controlling and intervention

Fifth: mechanisms of follow up and evaluation

Sixth: code of conduct

The optimum method of protecting children is to empower them for protecting themselves

First: aim of the policy

By applying the policy of child protection in its work units, EDO targets the following:

- raising the awareness inside the society towards child abuse
- providing guidelines for employees and others, along with identifying the possibilities of dealing with protection, reporting, and responding to the concerns related to any abuse against the child
- eliminating the risk of child abuse through controlling the procedures of appointing and choosing employees and others
- eliminating the risk of child abuse through creating a broad – minded and mindful management inside the organization and during dealing with children

Second: the scope of protection and situations of risk

Protecting children from all conducts or transgressions which are represented in negligence, harm, mistreatment, or exploitation, like:

- a) doing harm to the living, health, and physical safety of a child, including using or the threat of using any forms of violence or abuse

General framework of a child protection policy inside the EDO work units

- b) doing harm to the mental and psychological safety of a child, including threatening, terrifying, frightening, or humiliating him
- c) treating or participating at treating the child carelessly, especially the child who lacks living in a safe and stable family environment
- d) depriving the child of basic education or vocational training
- e) kidnapping, selling, trafficking of a child for any purpose or in any form whatsoever
- f) committing or participating at sexual offence against child, especially by a member of the family, the child guardian, the care provider, or any other person has a close relation with the child
- g) assisting in the sexual exploitation of children through producing or using sexual goods or services which include using children, including using them in producing pornographic materials, exploiting them in prostitution or tourism in order to have sexual intercourse with them, making them participate at sex shows, child marriage, and trafficking of them for the above purposes
- h) assisting in the economic exploitation of children, in particular the worst form of children labor which represents violation of the provisions of law, along with ignoring the child life to play and enjoy the spare times
- i) seducing children by causing him to participate or be exposed to any exploitation activities or the activities which cause damage to the physical, mental, or educational growth of a child
- j) the failure to protect children who are the victims of armed conflicts and other conditions of disorder instability, like civil children, refugee children, internally displaced children, migrant children, and recruiting children in the armed forces
- k) the failure to protect children subject to custody or the children who are involved in the judicial system as victims or witnesses

Third: procedures and measure

- (1) It is prohibited to deprive children of his various rights "like having good life, education, playing, health, expressing his opinion and participating, rehabilitation and capacity development, inclusion and participation.....".
- (2) the committee of child protection should cooperate with the units working with children "like nurseries, schools, Maternal and Child Care Centers, Abilities Development Centers for Persons with Disabilities, literacy classes.....etc" in developing the environment which encourages the consistent physical, mental, psychological, and social growth of a child for the purpose of fulfilling their potential through the following:

- (A) creating an atmosphere based on caring for the child interests as well as his individual talents, which includes the provision of special conditions required for upgrading every child "a boy and girl, child with and without disabilities, as well as children having scarce talents or superior abilities
- (B) establishing an atmosphere which could provide the conditions suitable for developing the child personality and for qualifying him to assume responsibility during his life
- (C) creating an atmosphere which could developing respecting human rights, as well as the basic liberty of children, others, and natural environment
- (3) a protection should be provided for children who frequently visit the EDO work units against physical or psychological harm, sexual assault, violence, humiliation, or exploitation by employees or schoolmates, in particular:
 - (A) All individuals who have relation with the children assembly places are not allowed to use physical punishment in violation of article 31 of this law; the methods of maintaining discipline and organization based on mutual respect and justice.
 - (B) Instructions supporting hatred, violence, fanaticism, or discrimination should be discouraged.
 - (C) All persons who have relation with schools should avoid the aggressive spirit and relationship among school mates, as well as any other case which may hinder the child ability to participate fully in a school or the institution of vocational training, or to develop his personal talents.
 - (D) A child should not be enforced or allowed to participate in any activities that may put his personal safety or health in danger.
- (4) It is prohibited to expose a child to torture or any kind of harsh, inhuman, or humiliating treatment or punishment.
- (5) It is prohibited to expose a child to punishment or disciplinary methods which undermine his dignity, including all forms of physical and psychological violence, as well as other means that may humiliate a child. All disciplinary methods and measures should be educational, acceptable, and suitable for the child age, his physical and psychological conditions, as well as his growth degree.

Fourth: mechanisms of controlling and intervention

- A number of 2 reference persons should be appointed inside every one of the EDO work units, who should be in charge of assuring that the work environment is a safe environment for children – controlling any violations – carrying out any interventions in coordination with the unit management. In case there are interventions higher than that of the site, a case should be referred to the Committee of Protection at

the level of the EDO Office which, in turn, carries out the necessary interventions that ensures the optimum interests of a child.

- A box of suggestion or complaints may be established inside every one of the work units.
- A meeting every four years is to be held between the Committee of Protection at the level of the EDO Office and reference persons at work sites and fields in order to control the challenges which face applying the policy.

Mechanisms of intervention

At the level of field units: a consultation is conducted with the unit management in order to make the proper intervention, based on every case.

At the level of the EDO Office: carrying out the interventions which the unit is unable to make.

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is a statement of behaviors which are expected from the employees of EDO Office and others when dealing with children. All employees and others who are dealing with children should be aware of the children care, along with taking into account that the principle of exerting the due diligence should remain existent, and upon which the employees and others are committed with applying the due practices with the child who is in their custody, in addition to assuming the responsibility of ensuring the safety and security of this child; the responsibility may extend in many times to the scope of a legal duty.

The code of conduct aim

Supporting the child rights where the EDO ensures the child right in:

- listening to him and taking his points of views into consideration
- encouraging and assisting him in participating at the decisions affecting him
- improving his care, growth, and protection in order to invest all his potentials
- considering him a main partner in developing and improving his health and safety, as well as raising him well, such that his optimum interest should be the most important target
- honoring, respecting, and understanding him in consistent with his culture, religion, and ethnic origin
- his needs should be clear and identified

Therefore, the employees and others who are working with a child have to:

- do their best in order to understand children inside the local environment in which they live
- work with children in a manner which enhances his abilities and improves his potentials
- look positively at children and honoring them as individuals having specific rights and clear needs

<p style="text-align: center;">The employees and others who are working with a child have to do the following:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The employees and others who are working with a child have to refrain from doing the following:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comply with the good appearance and good conducts during working with a child. - Empower children through promoting their rights, and raise their awareness of such rights. - Avoid the situations in which children are isolated and where it is difficult to monitor the conduct, like the case in cars and offices. - Oppose the bad habits and realize the expected risks which may lead to the child abuse. - Promote the culture of open – mindedness, where it is possible to discuss and raise the subjects which are related to the concerns of a child interests. - Ensure the probability of watching and observing a child whenever it is possible and applying the rule of not being alone with a child or arranging a proper alternative. - Organize awareness workshops for children in order to identify whether or not they accept the behaviors of adults towards them. - Identify and avoid sensitive or unacceptable situations which lead to the suspicious accusation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using any physical punishment, including beating, harassment, or physical assault. - Having any sexual relationship with a child. - Being involved by any form in any improper conduct, like kissing, hugging, or touching the child. - Conducting through transaction, like granting gifts, or in an inappropriate way, preparing humiliating activities for a child, or placing him in a place which may put him in danger. - Establishing relationships involving abusing or exploiting a child. - Performing special needs for a child, which he can perform on his own. - Disappointing, insulting, disregarding, or despising a child, along with being involved in a psychological assault against him. - Discriminating among children through favoritism or preference in dealing, like giving gifts or money. - Spending too much time with a child privately away from others.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Respect the principle of confidentiality of information on target children.- Ensure respecting children when shooting them, through making sure of their acceptance when shooting them. Moreover, it is required to assure that the children wear suitable clothes.- Consider that touching the child body may be for the purpose of providing him with comfort may be misunderstood by the children or the observers.	
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