



SAFEGUARDING

Policy for Children and Youth

VERSION : 1.0

Approval by the Board : Yes

Effective date : 7 February 2024

Next Review by date : Three years from effective date

Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all CANSA staff, Board members and all others involved in the work of CANSA including, but not limited to volunteers, interns, consultants and service providers, member organizations and partners.

Purpose of the Policy

The safeguarding policy has been put in place to ensure that any children and youth who come into direct contact with CANSA or its member organizations or any other people as part of CANSA's programme feel safe and comfortable.

CANSA will ensure systems to mitigate/ minimize any risk to the children/ youth who participate in CANSA's events/ programmes from any deliberate or unintentional actions that lead to the risk of, or actual, harm caused by CANSA's staff, representatives, partners, volunteers, or contractors.

CANSA acknowledges fully the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and youth, and will further ensure that all our safeguarding measures are embedded, accessible, communicated and sensitized clearly to staff, partners and members in a language they understand.

CANSA will encourage and create platforms for equal, active and effective participation of youth from different sections of society irrespective of their age, socio-economic background, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, identity, sexual orientation or identity.

CANSA Senior Management Team will ensure that the policy is well circulated, informed and put into practice by all its staff, member organizations, interns, consultants and associates to take every step and action required to keep children and youth safe and protected.

This includes:

- Designating a point person for ensuring safeguarding during all CANSA's programmes and events that require children/ youth participation.
- Allocating financial and human resources for training staff, consultants, vendors or any person who comes in contact with children/ youth as part of CANSA's work to follow principles of safeguarding and abide by the safeguarding policy and its procedures.
- Assigning a designated Board Member with the responsibility for child/ youth safeguarding oversight through proactively 'checking and challenging' that safeguarding is effective throughout the CANSA's operations.
- Implementing appropriate responses to alleged breaches of this policy.
- Providing 'Minimum Safeguarding Requirements' to ensure consistency of safeguarding provision across CANSA and its network members.

To ensure the safeguarding of children/ youth CANSA commits to:

- ensure opportunities for equal participation for all children/ youth irrespective of their age, gender, differential abilities, sexual orientation or any other vulnerability.
- value and listening to all children/ youth and young people;
- ensure that all staff and people directly associated with our work understand their responsibility to prevent and report any form of abuse and sexual exploitation of children/ youth.
- ensure that children/ youth are fully clad and represented in a dignified manner in any photographs/ videos taken and no information about their true identity/ actual address is revealed without their informed consent in case of youth and parents/ guardians informed consent in case of children.
- in case of any safeguarding concerns raised against any CANSA staff, member organization or their staff, volunteer, consultant or any person working directly with children/ youth as part of CANSA's work, the case will be investigated by a safeguarding committee constituted by CANSA Senior Management Team and based on the recommendations of the investigation team, SMT will take final decision, which may include suspension or termination.

Policy Statement

A child is anyone under the age of 18 and a youth is anyone in the age between 19 – 24 years.

- **Scope:** The policy applies to all CANSA staff, Board members and all others involved in the work of CANSA including, but not limited to volunteers, interns, consultants and service providers, member organizations and partners.
- **Definition:** This policy acknowledges and covers all forms of child abuse, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation. CANSA has zero tolerance for any form of child/ youth abuse and sexual exploitation by our staff, our partner's staff and those who represent us.
- **Child/ Youth Safeguarding Policy and procedures** together with the CANSA's Code of Conduct cover all aspects of our operations and programming and will be practiced in all CANSA Programmes.
- **Staff training and induction:** All CANSA staff must receive induction and training on the safeguarding policy within one month of their recruitment. CANSA will ensure a staff is dedicated to formally execute the safeguarding policy and procedures training to CANSA's newly recruited staff members to build their understanding on the policy and meet high standards of safeguarding compliance. It should be reflected in the job description of the responsible staff.
- **Responsibility and accountability:** All CANSA staff and representatives/ members must demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and conduct towards children/ youth both in their private and professional lives. They have a responsibility to understand and promote the Child Safeguarding Policy, procedures and the Code of Conduct. They must do all that they can to prevent, report and respond immediately to any child safeguarding concerns.

'Unacceptable behaviour and conduct' refers to committing any acts of

physical, emotional or sexual abuse including neglect or exploitation of a child including child labour and putting them at risk of deliberate or unintentional harm; non-compliance with policies and procedures and failing to take appropriate action to prevent or report any violations and poor safeguarding practice.

It is the responsibility of every individual contracted or associated with CANSA's work to make sure incidents that breach the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and other related policies are reported and recorded through the appropriate mechanisms.

- **Risk Assessment:** For any programme/ event requiring the presence and participation of children/ youth CANSA will undertake a stock of any potential risk factors in a structured manner conduct a comprehensive risk assessment before the event and categorize the risk involved as 'high', 'medium' or 'low' and mention the mitigation plan. For any high-risk identified, the activity must either be aborted or must propose a change in strategy to minimize risk. Risk assessment will be revised and updated in case any new risk emerges, and mitigation measures will be planned accordingly.
- **Reporting and response:** All CANSA staff and people directly associated with our work must understand their personal responsibility to prevent and report any form of abuse and sexual exploitation of children/ youth.

CANSA will ensure the Child Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and reporting procedures and mechanisms are made widely available and explained well to children/youth, all staff, partner staff and all relevant third parties and stakeholders who engage directly with children / youth participating in the programmes/ events to ensure maximum safety and security of programme participants throughout the preparation and execution stage of the events.

In case of any safeguarding concerns raised against any CANSA staff, member organization or their staff, volunteer, consultant or any person working directly with children/ youth as part of CANSA's work, the case will be investigated by a safeguarding committee constituted by CANSA Senior Management Team and

based on the recommendations of the investigation team SMT will take final decision, which may include suspension or termination.

- **Review and Updation:** The policy will be reviewed after three years of its implementation to ensure its relevance to CANSA’s programmes and operations and updated as per requirement. If the need arises, the policy may be reviewed and updated before three years, as the case may be.

Key Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Safeguarding	Safeguarding refers to making CANSA safe for children/ youth. This means keeping children and youth protected from both intentional or unintentional acts that lead to the ‘risk of’ or ‘actual harm’ by CANSA’s staff, representatives or associates who come into direct and indirect contact with children/ youth due to our programmes and interventions.
Child	Everyone under the age of 18
Youth	Everyone between the age of 19 – 24 years
Child Abuse	Child abuse consists of anything, which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of a safe and healthy development into adulthood.
Physical Abuse	Physical abuse is the non-accidental use of physical force that deliberately or inadvertently causes a risk of/ or actual injury to a child/ youth. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing non-accidental physical harm to a child/ youth. Physical harm can also be resulted from sexual abuse, e.g. physical injury from rape or attempted rape, child getting pregnant due to rape. Physical harm can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness or temporary, permanent injury or disability of a child.

Emotional Abuse	<p>Emotional abuse involves doing harm to a child/ youth’s emotional, intellectual, mental or psychological development. This may occur as an isolated event or on an ongoing basis. Emotional abuse includes but is not limited to any humiliating or degrading treatment (e.g. bad name-calling, threats, yelling/screaming/cursing, teasing, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming etc.), failure to meet a child/ youth’s emotional needs, and rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, isolating or confining a child/ youth. Emotional harm can also be resulted from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), e.g. short- or long-term trauma from rape and sex trafficking.</p>
Neglect	<p>Neglect includes failing to prevent harm; failing to ensure adequate supervision; failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment or providing inappropriate medical treatment (e.g. administering medication when not authorized); or failing to provide a safe physical environment (e.g. exposure to violence, unsafe programming location, unsafe sleeping practices, releasing a child to an unauthorized adult, access to weapons or harmful objects, failing to child-proof a space that children will occupy etc.). It can also be CANSA staff, partners, contractors and sub-grantees failing to apply minimum requirements as set out in mandatory procedures.</p>

Sexual Abuse	<p>Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, touching outside of clothing. They may also include non- contact activities, like involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Both males and females can commit sexual abuse, as can other children.</p>
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<p>Exploitation and child labour</p>	<p>Child exploitation is an umbrella term used to describe the abuse of children who are forced, tricked, coerced or trafficked into exploitative activities including child labour. Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.
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Related Documents

CANSA Code of Conduct

CANSA Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Exploitation Policy

CANSA Gender Policy



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