



## *NAN -Child Protection Policy*

### **Introduction**

This document is the Child Protection Policy for the Nanny Angel Network, which will be followed by all members of the organization.

The principles upon which the *Child Protection Policy* is based are:

- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount
- The welfare of the families will be promoted
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organization will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people and follow the policy outlined below
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organization will ensure that the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between individuals will be treated with respect

### **Policy**

#### **1. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety**

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage of involvement with children and families. In all cases, it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the children such as:

- If emergency medical attention is required, calling 911, give address and reason you are calling
- If a child is in immediate danger, call the police at 911, give address and reason for your call

#### **2. Recognition of Abuse or Neglect**

##### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve:

- Hitting, punching, slapping, pinching, grabbing
- Shaking
- Throwing
- Burning or scalding
- Suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child

Signs of physical abuse may include:

- Bruising, faded bruises or black eyes
- Pinch marks

- Bites marks
- Welts or broken bones
- Slap marks
- Burns

If children are going through physical abuse they:

- May report pain
- Have inconsistent explanations for injuries
- Will not make eye contact
- Are sensitive
- Are defensive
- Have multiple school absences
- May appear to be fearful of adults
- May show unusual aggression

### **Emotional/Verbal Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child which causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and psychological development. It may consist of:

- Conveying to the child that he/she is worthless, unloved, stupid, fat, ugly or inadequate
- Blaming, belittling, criticizing or rejecting the child
- Parent is consistently critical of the child, disappointed in child, states child fails to meet expectations, can't do anything right or is a real burden

The child may show signs of being emotionally/verbally abused by:

- Being verbally abusive to adults
- Being overly compliant
- Showing signs of passive or aggressive behavior
- Fearful or anxious
- Acting or speaking in a self-degrading way
- Being overly sensitive
- Demonstrating low self-esteem

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve:

- Physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities like:
  - Looking at or in the production of pornographic material
  - Watching sexual acts
  - Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

The child may show signs of sexual abuse by:

- Making inappropriate comments, questions or touching
- Bruising on the genitals
- Cutting or Scratching
- Complaints of burning, soreness, sensitivity in the genital area
- Anxiety when asked to get undressed, i.e. for bath

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to:

- Provide child with adequate food, shelter or clothing
- Protect a child from physical harm or danger
- Ensure access to appropriate and timely medical care or treatment.
- Be responsive to a child's basic emotional needs.

Child Abuse crosses all racial, ethnic, religious, educational and socioeconomic levels.

Volunteers with NAN need to be alert to the signs of potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources. A potential abuser could be a grandparent, aunt or uncle, older cousin, neighbour, teacher, coach or other caregiver.

Nanny Angels should know how to recognize and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organization to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

### **What to do if Children talk to you about abuse or Neglect**

Abuse is generally not determined by one single indicator - it is a combination of them.

It is recognized that a child may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect or talk spontaneously, individually, or in groups when you are present. In these situations you must:

- Listen carefully to the child. **DO NOT** directly question the child
- Give the child time and attention
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said.
- Use the child's own words where possible
- Explain that you will need to get help to keep the child safe.

If you suspect or see any signs of abuse or neglect, it is your obligation to report your concerns to NAN and notify the local Children's Aid Society as soon as you leave the home. Do not confront the parents or other adults in the home.