

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Saath Gramin Trust is committed to safeguarding the dignity, rights, and well-being of every child. In line with Indian law and international child rights frameworks, the organization recognizes that child protection means shielding children from all forms of abuse—physical, emotional, and sexual—as well as neglect and exploitation.

All children, regardless of caste, class, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, or background, have the right to a safe and nurturing environment. Abuse can have lasting, devastating effects on a child's mental health, emotional development, and ability to thrive. Given that studies show over two-thirds of children in India face some form of abuse, this policy reflects our proactive stance to prevent harm and promote child well-being.

Saath Gramin Trust is committed to building a culture of safety, where every staff member, volunteer, and stakeholder demonstrates respectful, appropriate, and protective conduct toward children at all times.

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees (full-time, part-time, contractual)
- Volunteers, interns, consultants
- Visitors and partners engaged in programs involving children

It covers all interactions within the workplace and during any organizational activities, field visits, training sessions, or events.

2. Responsibilities

i. Governance & Administration

- Serve as custodians of this policy
- Ensure organization-wide awareness and access to the policy
- Make child protection a mandatory component of all staff and volunteer inductions
- Monitor compliance and oversee handling of policy violations

ii. All Staff and Team Members

- Must read, understand, and adhere to this policy at all times
- Must immediately report any suspicion or incident of child abuse or unsafe behavior
- Are expected to model positive, non-exploitative, and culturally sensitive behavior
- Failure to report concerns or violations will be treated as gross misconduct

iii. Directors and Team Leaders

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SAATH GRAMIN TRUST
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- Are responsible for raising awareness within teams and communities
- Are expected to escalate any breaches as per Saath Gramin Trust's reporting and disciplinary protocols
- Do not conduct investigations themselves, but support the reporting process

3. Preventive Measures

To uphold a child-safe environment, Saath Gramin Trust will:

- Regularly disseminate this policy and ensure accessibility across all levels
- Conduct thorough background checks during recruitment for roles involving child interaction
- Provide mandatory training and refresher sessions on child protection and abuse prevention
- Promote children's and women's rights in communities through field-based programming
- Foster a transparent culture where children and adults feel safe to voice concerns
- Encourage informal check-ins by staff to monitor children's comfort and well-being

4. Declaration of Commitment

- All staff, team members, and long-term volunteers must sign an annual declaration confirming their understanding and commitment to this policy and Saath Gramin Trust's Code of Conduct.

5. Code of Conduct: Expected & Prohibited Behaviour

- All individuals associated with Saath Gramin Trust must maintain professional and respectful behavior when working with or around children.

6. Prohibited Conduct

No staff, consultant, or team member shall:

- Physically harm, threaten, or abuse a child or woman
- Engage in exploitative, manipulative, or sexually inappropriate behavior
- Use abusive, suggestive, or offensive language
- Shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade a child or woman
- Discriminate based on gender, caste, class, religion, disability, sexuality, or age
- Touch, kiss, or demonstrate affection in ways that are culturally inappropriate or unwelcome
- Allow or encourage sexually explicit games among children
- Demonstrate activities or lessons involving inappropriate touching
- Promise secrecy that could compromise a child's safety

7. Failure to Act Includes:

- Ignoring inappropriate actions or behaviour by other adults or children
- Not reporting the use or possession of offensive material (e.g., pornography, violent

- content) by staff or team members in any format (digital or print)
- Not escalating concerns to the appropriate authority in a timely manner

8. Reporting and Accountability

All team members are responsible for creating a child-safe space. Anyone witnessing or suspecting abuse must report the concern to designated authorities within the organization.

Confidentiality will be maintained, and all reports will be addressed with seriousness and urgency. Appropriate disciplinary action, including termination or legal referral, will be taken against anyone found violating this policy.


9. Commitment to a Safer Society

Saath Gramin Trust is unwavering in its commitment to protect every child from harm. This policy reflects our values and our dedication to building a more just, inclusive, and child-friendly society through our programs, people, and partnerships.

This policy was approved by the Board in October 2024

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Saath Gramin Trust

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