

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, SOCIAL AND EDUCATION SCIENCES

Child Protection Policy (CPP)

POLICY GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES ON CHILD PROTECTION

Approved by the 107th Department Council of the Department of Social and
Behavioral Sciences

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Child Protection Policy of the European University Cyprus

The Child Protection Policy (CPP) sets out The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences commitment to the safety, protection and wellbeing of all children while on campus or involved in University activities including research projects related to children.

The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Policy statement

The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences affirms the rights of all children to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, as set out in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in the Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention, 2007). This policy has been drawn and is applied in conjunction with the Cyprus legislation regarding Child Abuse, paragraph 30.

“(91(I)/2014 (ΝΟΜΟΣ ΠΟΥ ΑΝΑΘΕΩΡΕΙ ΤΟ ΝΟΜΙΚΟ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΟ ΠΟΥ ΔΙΕΠΕΙ ΤΗΝ ΠΡΟΛΗΨΗ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΤΑΠΟΛΕΜΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΣΕΞΟΥΑΛΙΚΗΣ ΚΑΚΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΕΞΟΥΑΛΙΚΗΣ ΕΚΜΕΤΑΛΛΕΥΣΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΙΚΗΣ ΠΟΡΝΟΓΡΑΦΙΑΣ)” (Appendix 1)

The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences Child Protection Plan

Every person who works at or operates on behalf of the European University Cyprus must be alert to the possibility of child abuse and of their obligation to convey any concerns to the relative National Child Protection Officers, such as the Cyprus Police (the information is in accordance to the EU standards provided in the Manual “Child Safeguarding Standards” (Keeping Children Safe, 2014).

A code of conduct

A staff member is appointed as a Child Protection Officer (CPO) to facilitate the implementation of this policy. The officer will ensure that the Code of Conduct will provide all staff members and/or internees/students or subcontractors involved in projects related to and/or involving children with the Code of Conduct.

All members of The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences will sign a copy of the Code of Conduct prior to performing any professional duties relating to children and annually thereafter.

What we will do

We will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse by providing our members/staff? working with children with guidance and/or training geared towards:

- Awareness: we will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks for children.
- Prevention: we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks for children
- Reporting: we will ensure that staff and others are clear about what steps to take whenever concerns arise regarding the safety of children in alignment with the Cyprus Law
- Responding: we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children whenever concerns arise regarding possible abuse, in alignment with the Cyprus Law

Definitions relating to Child Protection

The definitions were found (a) World Health Organisation/Fact sheets/Child Maltreatment (b) The Department of Social Welfare Cyprus, (c) The manual of Keeping Children Safe (2014) entitled “Child safeguarding standards and how to implement them”, d) in the publication of Council of Europe Convention (2012) entitled “Protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse” and in e) the Terminology Guidelines (2016) prepared by Terminology and Semantics interagency Working Group of Sexual Exploitation of Children (f) Cyprus Legislation

Child: The United Nation’s Convention on the rights of the Child defines a child as every human being below the age of eighteen years.

Child abuse: Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect of people under 18 years of age. More specifically, according to the World Health Organisation, “child abuse” or “maltreatment” constitutes ‘all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power’. The following examples describe different forms of abuse (WHO, 1999; Cyprus Department of Social Welfare), however the list is not exhaustive:

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, spitting, spanking, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child who they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as 'fictitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen’s syndrome by proxy'.
- **Emotional abuse** is defined as the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve age or developmentally

inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur in isolation?. It may also include confinement and/or restricting a child's movement.

- **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 (e.g., rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in viewing, or in the production of pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is defined as the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's physical or cognitive development.

Violence in the Family: Under section 3 of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Laws 119(I)/2000 and 212(I)/2004 means: "any act, omission or behavior which causes physical, sexual or mental injury to any member of the family and includes violence used for the purpose of having sexual intercourse without the consent of the victim as well as of restricting its freedom."

Violence in the presence of minors: Under section 3 of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Laws 119(I)/2000 and 212(I)/2004 this means that "if violence takes place in the presence of minor members of the family it shall be considered as violence exercised against the said minor members of the family. This is also likely to cause them psychological traumas".

Child protection: is a broad term to describe philosophies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home. In the current context, it applies to the School's duty to make sure that its members,

operations and programmes do not harm children, that is they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the activities and programmes in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

Direct contact with children / Work with children: Is any physical presence of adults with children in the context of the organisation's work (such as research, dissemination activities, care, supervision, guidance or control of children or routine interaction with children). The duration (short- term or long-term) is not relevant.

Indirect contact with children: having access to information about children such as names, addresses, photographs and case studies.

The policy

This policy is intended for all the School's staff, students/interns and subcontractors of the organization working with children in any form or way. The CPP of the School includes the general obligations of its members. It is distributed to all those involved in work and projects that involve or that concern children (either via research or academic work) to inform them about their obligations and duty to safeguard children from harm. Additionally, the organization has the responsibility to ensure that all its members and subcontractors, operations, programmes, practicums, trainings or workshops cause no harm to children, do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse. Moreover, any concerns that may be raised about children's safety within the communities in which the School operates, are reported directly to the appropriate authorities. The knowledge and acceptance of CPP and its guidelines is an essential prerequisite for recruiting employees geared towards working with children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles advocating a zero-tolerance to child maltreatment:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, irrespective of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.

- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Child abuse is never acceptable
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- The organisation shall work in partnership with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health, and development of children.

European University Cyprus will:

- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff members volunteers (e.g., University students) and subcontractors to adopt best practices that safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Ensure safe recruitment by requiring, volunteers and subcontractors to provide certificate of clean criminal record and a certificate of clean criminal record specifically in relation to crimes against children (see **Ο Νόμος για την Πρόληψη και την Αντιμετώπιση της Σεξουαλικής Κακοποίησης και Εκμετάλλευσης Παιδιών και της Παιδικής Πορνογραφίας, Νόμος: 91(I)/2014**). The record and certificate are issued by the Police Department.

In the case of research projects, The School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences will ensure that

- Any research undertaken by the organization is initially approved by the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee. Should data be collected from minors via the schools then additional approval must be granted by the Center of Educational Research and Evaluation of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports in Cyprus, prior to the research.
- Request informed written consent from parents/guardians if the children are under the age of 18, and where appropriate (capable of

providing informed assent), from the children themselves. For the procedure of assessing if the child can provide assent, their age, literacy, cultural background and any learning difficulties or disabilities should be taken into account (see National Bioethics Committee protocols http://www.bioethics.gov.cy/moh/cnbc/cnbc.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument). Assent is a term used to express willingness to participate in research by a person under 18, but who is old enough to understand the proposed research in general, its expected risks and possible benefits, and the activities expected of him/her as a participant

- Any children participating in research should be informed about the nature of the research, in child friendly language, where they understand the research proposed.
- Any children participating should feel comfortable at all times to continue the research. This should be monitored by the researcher.
- If any of the children participating would like to discontinue, this right should be respected at all times.
- It is possible that a one-on-one meeting might be needed or a confidential interview. In these cases, it is advisable to perform the interview in a room with an open door or visual access.

Procedure for reporting alleged or suspected child abuse

- The CPO must be notified
- The CPO together with the person who receives the information/complaint or whom suspects the abuse, immediately draws up an official written report that they submit to the Offices of the Crime Combating Department (CY police) for further handling of the case.
- The CPO will inform the family, if the perpetrator is not a family member.
- The CPO should avoid giving more information than is needed to parents, as it may influence or alter possible evidence.