Limmoed Netherlands Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Limmoed Netherlands believes that individuals should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility at our events to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable individuals and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Limmoed Netherlands is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its participants. This includes all office staff employed by Limmoed Netherlands, all volunteers and all attendees at physical and online events.

This policy is an integral part of Limmoed Netherlands staff and volunteer training. A copy of this policy can be found on our webiste (www.Limmoed.nl) and is always made available at Limmoed Netherlands events.

We recognise that:

- All individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some individuals are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents/guardians, carers, vulnerable individuals and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.
- In cases involving children, the welfare of the child or vulnerable individual is paramount, as enshrined by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 24; the UN's Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the 2015 Dutch law 'revision measures child protection' (https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0034989/2015-01-01).

Definitions of the four main categories of abuse

Physical Abuse is the actual or potential physical harm caused by an action or lack of action, which is reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. Physical abuse may involve hitting, spanking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning and suffocating. It can also mean causing physical harm to a child by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing ill to a child. The incidents may be single or repeated.

Sexual Abuse is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who, by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power; the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. Child 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 and penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect and Negligent Treatment is the inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources

reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely affects his or her self-perception and development. It may involve conveying to the child that he or she is worthless, unloved, and inadequate, or there only to meet the needs of another person; or imposing inappropriate expectations upon him/her. Acts include restricting movement, threatening, scaring, discriminating, scapegoating, corrupting, ridiculing, degrading, bullying, humiliating (e.g. asking potentially embarrassing questions, demanding potentially embarrassing action) or other nonphysical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Specific Considerations: Child-to-Child Abuse
Allegations or concerns regarding the abuse of a child by another child need to be responded to with particular sensitivity; nevertheless, they have to be dealt with through the child protection procedures. All work with young people who have committed abuse requires an effective approach which ensures the protection of people affected, while at the same time supporting the young person in challenging and changing his/her behaviour. Any such approach requires:

- the recognition that a child who has abused another child differs significantly from adults who have committed similar offences, as the child is not fully aware of why he or she has committed abuse and what the consequences are
- keeping in mind that the best interest of the child is the primary consideration in all decisions made - for both the victim and the abuser.

Violation of Children's Privacy
The protection of a child's privacy refers to private data of the child as well as pictures, texts, films etc. about children which are produced for publicity purposes: Any information about a child's history, medical condition and family background has to be stored carefully and to be handled confidentially and with discretion. Children and even their parents or caregivers might not always be aware of a specific form of emotional abuse which might occur in fundraising, public relations or communication. A child's privacy is, for instance, violated by the production of unauthorised publicity material (pictures, films, texts, etc.) featuring the boy or girl; or by presenting sensitive information within a context that reveals the child's identity.

All staff, volunteers and external partners involved in spreading information on children and in creating and distributing publicity material act according to the following guidelines:

- When producing publicity material featuring a child, we need to ask both the child and his or her legal guardian (or at least an adult caregiver of the child) for permission to do so.
- We do not actively ask children to do or say anything that might make them feel displayed as 'objects of pity' (e.g. to speak about their past or ask for donations).
- We handle children's names carefully, especially in connection with sensitive information about the same children (e.g. the family background, their medical condition, disability or negative behaviour).
- We act with caution when it comes to combining textual and visual information whenever a text includes sensitive information about a child and whenever a photo or video track shows sensitive aspects of a child's life and reveals his or her identity.

Following these guidelines ensures the respect of the children's privacy while at the same time preventing, and raising awareness for, violations of that privacy. Based on these guidelines, staff and team members who are directly involved with children have the right and obligation to protect the children from any attempted violations of their privacy – be they intentional or not.

Key Parts of Child Protection Policy

- **Awareness:** Raise awareness of child abuse and its risks
- **Prevention:** Provide guidance on how to safeguard children from abuse
- **Reporting:** Set up and adhere to a clear and simple reporting procedure
- **Responding:** Ensure clear action is taken when child abuse is suspected or reported

Child Protection Guide for staff and team members

The aim of this guide is to make all those involved in running Limmoed events – either professionally or on a volunteer basis – aware of what to do if a participant discloses information to you about abuse or neglect that they or someone else has suffered. As an event organiser / Limmoed team member / volunteer, it is possible that you will be approached by a participant seeking help, advice or support.

1. Recognition of abuse

Abuse can take many forms including, but not exclusive to:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect and Negligent Treatment
- Emotional Abuse

2. What to do if a participant makes a disclosure to you about any form of abuse or neglect

It is recognised that a participant may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups whilst you are present.

In these situations, YOU MUST:

- Consider if you're in a group whether to continue the conversation privately (especially with children).
- Listen carefully. DO NOT directly question the individual.
- Give the participant time and attention – don't rush the disclosure process.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information the participant has or is about to share. Offering false confidentiality puts you in a difficult position because you are likely to have to pass on what you have been told.
- Allow the participant to give a spontaneous account; do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events, even if it is to clarify something you are unsure about.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the time, setting and people present. You should also take note of the participant's physical presentation in the case of physical abuse. Make these notes as carefully as possible and do not throw them away as they may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the participants' own words where possible – try not to change details for the sake of grammar or sentence structure as this could alter the account given.
- Once the participant has finished their account, reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell the participant what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep them safe.
- DO NOT ask the participant to repeat their account of events to anyone else.

3. Reporting a disclosure

In the event of a disclosure being made it must be reported via the designated team welfare officer or child protection officer as soon as possible. The welfare officer will handle the disclosure process from then on.

Child protection officers for Limmoed Netherlands are Lisette van Lieshout and Albert Ringer, they can be contacted through www.Limmoed.nl/contact-us/ or info@Limmoed.nl.

4. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in the safeguarding/disclosure situation.

IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NECESSARY TO SAFEGUARD THE PARTICIPANT CONCERNED.

If emergency medical attention is required, an ambulance should be called and then the on-site medic should be contacted. If there are concerns about continued (non-medical) danger, the police should be contacted (by dialling 112) and then on-site security team should be notified. If the report is made by a participant attending an online event, it may be necessary to notify their emergency contacts.

If you are in any doubt as to whether emergency action is required to ensure the safety or health of a participant or volunteer, please ask for advice from a senior volunteer (such as a board member), speak to someone at the security team, or call the police on a non-emergency number.

Policy Review

Limmoed Netherlands is committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.
This policy was last reviewed on 21/08/2023

Lisette van Lieshout
Chairperson Limmoed Netherlands
22/08/2023

Albert Ringer
Member activities committee
22/08/2023