

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

This policy affirms the commitment of Arrow Creative, Inc (Arrow) to protect all children from discrimination, harm, abuse and exploitation. Arrow endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and specifically Article 19 which states that:

Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

As such, Arrow shall seek to address all levels of child protection that may be affected by the organization's work, and will regularly revise its policy to ensure that it remains relevant and complies with current legislation.

Arrow also believes that the protection of children from abuse and exploitation is the responsibility of all those adults who participate in the work space of Arrow, including Program Managers, Program Coordinators, staff, instructors, chaperones, volunteers, donors, visitors and media.

The purpose of this policy, therefore, is to inform all Arrow staff and volunteers about child abuse and exploitation and promote a work culture that nurtures a child-safe and child-friendly environment where everyone is committed to keeping children safe from all forms of harm. Additionally, this policy provides guidance on how to respond to concerns and allegations of child abuse or exploitation.

In compliance with the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, Arrow considers a child to be a person below the age of 18 years. Arrow shall adhere to local and international child protection criminal laws, which prohibit the abuse and exploitation of children.

Adherence to this policy is a mandatory requirement for all persons who participate in the work space of Arrow.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

The abuse of a child can occur in several different ways, including:

Physical abuse: Occurring when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child and can include, but is not limited to, slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing.

Emotional abuse: A chronic attitude or behavior directed at a child whereby a child's self-esteem and social competence is undermined or eroded over time. This can take the form of, but is not limited to, name calling, bullying, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating, ignoring, devaluing, terrorizing, or isolating a child.

Neglect: The failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, space, and supervision, to the extent that the child's health and/or development are placed at risk.

Sexual Abuse: When a child is used by an another person for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification.

Sexual exploitation is the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the

exploitation of another. Child prostitution and trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation are examples of this.

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to the use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development (WHO, 1999).

Internet abuse and abusive images of children Abusive images of children, commonly referred to as child pornography, is defined as any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for sexual purposes. Increased access to technology has also meant that children are now subject to additional abuse through the internet. Abusive images of children are traded and transmitted over the internet. Digital and phone cameras have made it possible for some childrens' images to be distributed across the internet without their knowledge. Children may also be at risk of coming into contact with people who want to harm them when using the internet.

CORE OBLIGATIONS

This Policy applies to all members of Arrow staff, chaperones, volunteers, vendors, and people visiting Arrow programs and courses.

Arrow will act at all times to ensure children's safety and protection and will support the active contribution of its staff to achieve this goal.

Arrow representatives will:

- Treat all children with the highest standards of respect and courtesy regardless of race, color, sex, language, disability, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, social origin, birth or other status;
- Be committed to creating a culture of openness and mutual accountability that empowers children to be knowledgeable of their rights, to know what is acceptable and unacceptable, and to know what they can do if there are problems;
- Take steps to empower children by providing opportunities for their views to be heard regarding acceptable and unacceptable behavior;
- Encourage children to speak up about issues that affect them;
- Ensure physical contact is at all times culturally appropriate and not an invasion of the child's privacy;
- Use positive, non-violent methods to manage children's behavior;
- Raise any concerns of inappropriate behavior immediately. Immediately report any of the following to the Program Coordinator and the Program Manager*:
 - a. Disclosure or allegation from a child, community member or Arrow staff regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child;
 - b. Behavior by any Arrow employee, vendor or volunteer that breaches this policy or the Child Protection Code of Conduct;
 - c. Inappropriate use of Arrow technology including computers and photographic equipment;
 - d. Any person engaging in suspicious behavior that could be associated with child abuse, exploitation or trafficking;

- e. Any involvement in any situation where one's actions could be misinterpreted or likely to bring the organization into disrepute; or
 - f. Anyone being investigated for any crime or charged with any criminal offence.
- Comply with any investigation (including interviews) and make available any documentation or information necessary for completion of the investigation.
Respond swiftly and in confidence to any such allegations;

Unacceptable behavior

In addition, within and outside their work environments at all times, Arrow representatives must not:

- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative or develop physical or sexual relationships with children that they interact, engage or work with;
- Spend excessive time alone with a child, away from others, behind closed doors or in a secluded area;
- Take a child to their home or visit a child at their home where they may be alone with that child, or sleep in the same room;
- Sleep in the same bed as a child or allow a child to stay overnight at their home unsupervised;
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that they could do for themselves or show favor to particular children to the exclusion of others (for example, promising a child gifts or enticements);

- Engage in sexual activity with a child regardless of the age of consent locally (mistaken belief regarding the age of the child is not an arguable defense);
- Be intoxicated (under the influence of alcohol or drugs) prior to assuming responsibility for any child or during time with a child;
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or abuse children (even where this may be culturally acceptable);
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse;
- Use inappropriate language - whether of an offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, abusive or sexual nature – when speaking with or whilst in the presence of a child;
- Condone or participate in behavior with children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive, including being part of harmful traditional practices, spiritual or ritualistic abuse;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child, or otherwise perpetrate any form of abuse;
- Traffic children or exploit them for their labour (e.g. domestic servants) or for sexual purposes (e.g. prostitution);
- Take a child alone in a vehicle without parental and managerial consent,
- Use their relationship with children to obtain inappropriate favors; or
- Behave in a way whereby his/her actions (physical, verbal or otherwise) are or could be perceived as offensive, inappropriate, abusive, neglectful or exploitative.

ANY BREACH OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT WILL LEAD TO DISMISSAL FROM EMPLOYMENT OR SERVICE AND MAY RESULT IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

CORE PRINCIPLES

Arrow has adopted the following core principles as part of this policy, and they will be incorporated into all relevant documents:

1.All forms of abuse and exploitation of children by Arrow staff and volunteers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.

2.When a staff member or representative has concerns or suspicions regarding any type of child abuse or exploitation s/he must report such concerns via established organizational reporting mechanisms. Arrow will treat all concerns raised seriously and treat all parties involved fairly. All reports will be handled professionally, confidentially and will be acted upon within 24 hours.

3.All Arrow staff members are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents all forms of abuse and exploitation of children and promotes the implementation of the Arrow code of conduct.

4.Sexual relationships between Arrow staff and participants (both adults and children) are prohibited. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not an arguable defense.

5.Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY

All Arrow employees and volunteers will be informed of Arrow's child protection policies, and compliance with them is expected. Any breach is treated with the utmost seriousness and will be investigated and dealt with accordingly.

Child protection awareness will be included at all stages of Arrow operations, including the hiring, orientation and training of all employees and volunteers who will come into contact with children at all levels and in all offices.

Arrow will ensure that all Arrow employees and volunteers have read these policies. All employees and volunteers will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have both read the policies and will comply with the requirements. Any changes made to the policies will be communicated immediately.

RECRUITMENT AND STAFF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Arrow is committed to child-safe recruitment, selection and screening practices to ensure that the organization does not employ or retain persons who pose a risk to children. All Arrow staff and volunteers will be informed of this policy during the recruitment process.

Background checks will be required of employees and volunteers who conduct work that brings them into direct contact with children. Background checks may include police record or criminal history checks.

All staff will be required to provide official or government issued proof of identity documents, such as a passport and relevant qualifications, when requested by Arrow to

do so. Additional screening measures will include verbal reference checks and interview questions.

Arrow may refuse to employ or may terminate the employment of any person who it reasonably believes may pose a risk to children.

TRAINING

This policy will be made available to all staff, volunteers and others visiting or involved with Arrow projects. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Director of Education to ensure that all Arrow employees and volunteers under his/her supervision have a copy of this policy and that all Arrow staff members under his/her supervision are aware of and trained on this policy.

Staff will be made aware of the importance of and their own responsibility in the upholding and implementation of this policy. Any violation of the policy (including any suspected or known abuse or exploitation) must be reported directly to the Executive Director and Director of Education.

PHOTOGRAPHIC, ELECTRONIC AND PRINTED MATERIAL

Arrow undertakes all reasonable precautions to protect paper and electronic information about children. At all times, staff members are required, to the best of their abilities, to adhere to the following Arrow policies in relation to privacy and photography or use of image:

(i) All communications involving children must use pictures and text that are decent, respectful, and age-appropriate. Children should be appropriately clothed for their culture and the activity and not in poses that could be perceived as sexually suggestive.

(ii) Photographs, films, videos and DVDs must present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable manner that endangers their safety. Children should be appropriately clothed for their culture, the activity and not in poses that could be perceived as sexually suggestive.

(iii) Images should be honest representations of situations and the facts.

(iv) The identities of children in photographs, images, and video are not disclosed without consent of the parent or legal guardian.

(v) Photographs, film, and videos not utilized must be securely stored with access being limited only to relevant staff.

ALL Arrow EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION ANY OF THE FOLLOWING*:

- Disclosure or allegation from a child, community member or Arrow staff regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child;
- Behavior by any Arrow employee, vendor or volunteer that breaches this policy or the Child Protection Code of Conduct;
- Inappropriate use of Arrow technology including computers and photographic equipment;
- Any person engaging in suspicious behavior that could be associated with child abuse, exploitation or trafficking;

- Any involvement in any situation where one's actions could be misinterpreted or likely to bring the organization into disrepute; or
- Anyone being investigated for any crime or charged with any criminal offence.

IF A PERSON KNOWINGLY CHOOSES NOT TO REPORT AN INCIDENT OR ANY SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION, THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH ARROW WILL BE SUSPENDED OR TERMINATED, BASED ON THE RESULTS OF AN INVESTIGATION.

Investigating and Reporting Guidelines

If an incident is reported:

- 1.The Executive Director will conduct an investigation in a timely and thorough manner and may require the assistance of external mediation services, legal or other expert advice. The investigation and its outcomes will be appropriately documented.
- 2.The investigation may require the interview of the person making an allegation, other witnesses and the alleged perpetrator or suspect. The matter will be referred to local police or other authorities if it is considered to involve criminal behavior.
- 3.All reports will be handled professionally, confidentially and expediently. In all reports reviewed by people other than the immediate investigative committee, the names of people involved and the details will remain confidential. Any disclosure of reports or information will be on a "need to know" basis or will be made if required by relevant law or child protection authorities.

4.All reports made in good faith will be viewed as being made in the best interests of the child, regardless of the outcomes of any investigation. Arrow will ensure that the interests of the person reporting child abuse, neglect, or exploitation in good faith are protected.

5.Any Arrow representative who intentionally makes false or malicious allegations will face disciplinary action.

6.The rights and welfare of the child is of prime importance. Every effort will be made to protect the rights and safety of the child throughout any investigation.

7.During an investigation, the best interests of the child may warrant the suspension of an Arrow staff. Any staff member suspended in this manner will continue to receive full pay, recognizing that the staff member is entitled to a fair process and that this action is not a pre-judgment of the outcome of any investigation.