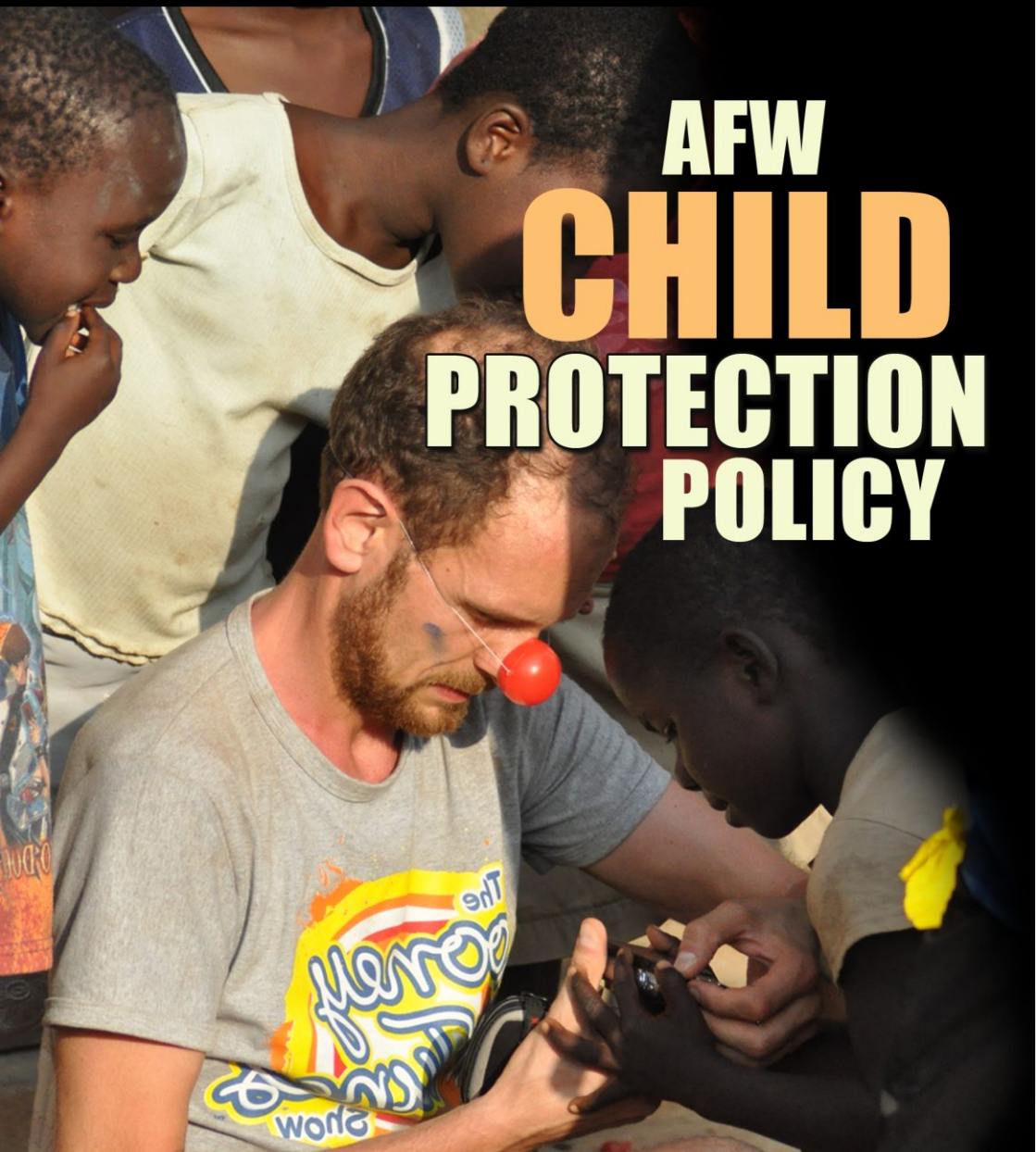


SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO



AFW CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Procedures . Policies . Good Practice
for Educative Pastoral Communities

PREFACE

Africa, Land Of The Young

Africa is a young continent! Practically over half the population is under the age of 25. Don Bosco and those who follow his way of education cannot but feel at home in Africa.

In a continent rich in natural resources, Young People are indeed the richest resource of the continent. Millions of them are eager and hungry for education, longing to improve their life situation and yearning to belong to a just and peaceful society. Yet they are at a greater disadvantage, more impressionable, more vulnerable and often exposed to grave danger thus making them easy "victims of injustice". As Don Bosco used to say: *"Young people are that part of human society so much exposed to danger and yet so rich in promise"*

To engage in the service of education in tune with the inspiration of the founder of the Salesians means to be for young people a community-of-persons where they feel accepted and affirmed.

Reason For The Document

It is precisely because they are so vulnerable that this policy and document is being drawn up.

There is the need to **EDUCATE** people, all those involved in education, as to what makes up a holistic educational environment.

The young themselves are to be helped to make them realize that they are active agents in their own formation. This will require that we **EMPOWER** them, giving them the skills and the tools that they may need to be able to protect themselves and speak out when necessary.

A **STOP** has to be made to situations of abuse and exploitation wherever they may exist. The many activities that the Salesians and their collaborators are carrying on in West Africa, were in the first

place in response to a particular need or hardship that the young people were facing.

The document also seeks to ensure that **JUSTICE** is done and that abusers are not only removed from contact with the young, but also when necessary to ensure they are prosecuted. Those who have suffered abuse are to be supported in overcoming the trauma with all the possible care, with a proper follow up so to ensure best conditions for their growth.

A Precious Heritage

We have received a very precious heritage from our Founder Don Bosco, which he called the *Preventive System*. It is the most unique gift that we can give to the Church and young people in West Africa.

In itself the *Preventive System* guarantees the promotion and protection of the dignity and value of young people. If it is well practiced, it will safeguard the rights of the young and promote their growth.

AFW Child Protection Policy And Church And Civil Law

This policy remains subject to the law of the Countries where the AFW presences are located, to the law of the Church and to the directives of superior authority in the Salesian Congregation: in no way intends to supersede them.

INTRODUCTION

The Salesians of Don Bosco and those who freely choose to share their educative mission and work, cherish and affirm each child/person as a gift from God. They value and encourage the participation of children and young adults in activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development. They strive to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. It is their policy to do everything possible to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people to whom they minister, in line with the universal values proclaimed and supported by civil societies and religious institutions.

The customs and practices of the various environments and cultures where the education of children take place are considered with open mind, without compromising on the basic criteria of service to the children expressed in this document, aware that every “culture, while important, does not have an absolute value, because only love is absolute” (ACG 411, 29).

This same policy is followed by all who work in our educative pastoral communities: Salesians, educators, employees, youth animators.

If any member of the Province or collaborator, no matter what office he/she holds, should violate the directives of this Policy he/she alone remains responsible. Neither the Local community nor the Province accepts any responsibility of personal choices which deliberately contradict the content and the spirit of this policy, which is accepted and undersigned as preliminary condition for partaking in the educative mission of the Salesians of Don Bosco in West Africa. The competent authority, following the procedures stated in this very policy, will promptly intervene whenever there is a reason to do so for safeguarding young people and all those who are involved in their education in AFW, and, if the case demands, can even stand as prosecutor against individuals when their behavior is harmful to those entrusted to the care of AFW, children or educators, individuals or corporate body.

FIRST PART: CHILD PROTECTION

(1)

Principles from Don Bosco's way of educating

Don Bosco's pedagogy is now more relevant than ever before and the wisdom enshrined in that tradition offers safeguarding measures similar to most modern prescriptions for safeguarding children and young people.

From the writings of Don Bosco and his first successors

- a) "Upon words and looks, even when indifferent, a bad interpretation is often times put by youth... the greatest possible precaution should therefore be taken when speaking of anything whatsoever with youths, be their age or condition what it may, or in any dealings with them."
- b) "What rules should be followed in inflicting punishments? If possible never make use of punishments; but when necessity demands it, let the following be borne in mind":
 - i. "The educator must strive to make himself loved by his pupils, if he wishes to make himself feared by them."
 - ii. "With the young, punishment is everything that is meant as a punishment. Thus it is known that a reproachful look is more effective than a blow. Praise of work well done, and just blame when duties are neglected are in themselves reward and punishment."
 - iii. "Except in rare instances corrections and punishments should not be given in public, but privately and apart from the others; and the greatest prudence and patience must be used to bring the pupil to see his fault, by the aid of reason and religion."
 - iv. "To strike one in any way, to make him kneel in a painful position, to pull his ears and other similar punishments, must be absolutely avoided... "

Hints from the Salesian System of education

- i. Treat all with whom and to whom we minister with respect and courtesy.
- ii. Respect the boundary of physical and emotional space that others require; using touch in a prudent and responsible way, respecting local cultures and the standard set in the civil law of each Country.
- iii. Provide educational care and pastoral ministry in a sufficiently safe environment; ordinarily one that is open and visible.
- iv. In the event of outings, behave with due prudence that has the other as its central concern. Avoid staying in the same room or travelling alone with a minor or vulnerable adult.
- v. Avoid all inappropriate communication with children and vulnerable adults through the internet, e-mail, text messages or otherwise. Slander and defamation can be prosecuted by civil law.
- vi. Avoid the use of the educative or pastoral role to foster relationships of dependence, subservience, or over-familiarity with one child or vulnerable adult to the exclusion of others.
- vii. Avoid any form of over-familiarity or inappropriate language that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment.

(2)

Best Practice and Guidelines

2.1 Creation of the environment

Don Bosco, in reaching out to the young, first sought to create an environment which held the positive values which he wanted to pass on, and which promoted and enhanced their growth. The natural environment for any person to grow is made up of a

community of persons where each individual is cherished and loved. The Salesian Pastoral and Educative community is called to be this safe and welcoming environment for growth.

2.2 Ensuring the Safety and Welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- a) All Salesians of Don Bosco, Salesian Sisters, lay workers and volunteers are aware of the best practice guidelines and are familiar with the overall child protection policy of AFW Province, which applies to all those who accept to work in Salesian environments in West Africa, without exception. Safeguards and boundaries/protocols help ensure that no adult puts himself/herself, or can be put by others, into situations which are 'unsafe' in this regard, or situations which are open to misinterpretation by others.
- b) For each child/young person attending our Salesian Presences, the contact details for the family/guardians, including emergency contact numbers, are to be documented. Information relating to any special medical needs which the child or young person may have, will be attentively considered.
- c) Best practice in relation to travel with children or young people should be observed. Ideally, personnel should not undertake any car or minibus journey alone with a child or young person, unless they have discussed their intentions, on each occasion, with the superior of the educative institution and the child's parents/guardians.
- d) A system is in place for recording any incidents or accidents while the child is in the care of the Salesian Institution.
- e) Alcohol and tobacco must not be used by personnel while they are supervising or working with children or young people.
- f) Physical punishment of children or young people is not permissible under any circumstances.
- g) One should not be alone with a minor in a secluded place and, if it is necessary to be alone with a minor, they should always be visible to other adults.

- h) One should not invite a minor to his or her private room and should not socially visit children or young people in their bedrooms. When necessary, for health and safety reasons, make sure another adult is present.
- i) Therapy rooms and all rooms where it may be necessary for one-to-one work should have sufficiently large glass panels to be visible from outside.
- j) Avoid dress, actions and language that could reasonably be interpreted as sexually provocative. Topics or vocabulary which could not comfortably be used in the presence of parents or another adult should not be employed with minor/s.
- k) Inappropriate behaviour/language by the children or young people will not go unchallenged.
- l) Personnel must not engage in inappropriate physical contact of any kind – including rough physical play, physical reprimand and horseplay. This should not prevent appropriate contact in situations where it is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of a child (for example, when a child is distressed).
- m) Particular care regarding privacy must be taken when children or young people are in locations such as changing areas, showers, toilets. One must avoid being the only adult present when the presence of an adult is necessary. The privacy of children should be respected. Care is needed to avoid inappropriate use of cameras or other recording of images which do not respect the privacy and can be felt as not decent.
- n) One should never be the only adult who is present overnight in dormitories/live-ins when minors are involved; if necessary a second adult is employed or asked to volunteer.

2.3 Contact and interactions with children

Don Bosco insists “that the youngsters should not only be loved, but that they themselves should know that they are loved.” There are many ways of showing affection, some of which are appropriate and others inappropriate. The following lists may help us to strike an accepted and happy medium in this area. More than a list of ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’, they are a reminder to live a role where one

enjoys trust with responsibility. One should remember that for Don Bosco the following examples of contact were appropriate mainly in the 'playground' which is a public space.

Appropriate contact and interactions with children

- i. Handshake;
- ii. normal hugs when initiated by a minor;
- iii. pat on the shoulder;
- iv. arms on shoulders;
- v. sitting close to or in the midst of children;
- vi. verbal praise of a minor's achievements;
- vii. holding hands during prayer, or when the minor is upset;
- viii. holding hands while walking with small children (in West Africa adults use to hold hands as a sign of deep friendship);
- ix. holding and picking up little children;
- x. smiling at and/or laughing with a minor.

Inappropriate contact and interactions with children

- i. Any touching of a minor shall be age appropriate and based on the need of the child and not on the need of the adult. If a child initiates physical contact which seems inappropriate, limited response is proper.
- ii. One does not hold, hug or touch a minor if the minor resists in any way.
- iii. One does not engage in excessive or frequent hugging.
- iv. If one-on-one pastoral care of a minor should be necessary, avoid meeting in isolated environments and in closed rooms where one cannot be seen. Schedule meetings and use locations that create accountability and do not give rise to suspicion.
- v. No minor shall enter an adult-personnel's living quarters unless accompanied by other adults.

- vi. No overnight trips with a minor or a group of minors unless at least one other adult (Salesian, parent or collaborator) is present.
- vii. No favouritism or emotional attachments, which place the minor ill-at-ease, and expose him to teasing from his/her companions.

2.4 Inappropriate children's behaviours

Inappropriate provocative behaviour by minors (indecent dressing, seductive behaviour through words, dancing, gestures...) will not go unchallenged. Parents are to be informed and called upon to exercise their parental responsibility for timely and appropriate corrective measures.

SECOND PART: CHILD ABUSE

1. Definitions of Child Abuse

The rationale behind drawing up a Safeguarding Policy for the West African province is based on good practice in working with children and vulnerable adults. Abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power than a child, young person or vulnerable adult abuses that power and causes harm to that person. Child abuse can be categorised into four different types:

- i. physical abuse or exploitation,
- ii. emotional abuse,
- iii. sexual abuse and sexual exploitation,
- iv. neglect.

A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time.

1.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any form of injury which is intentionally inflicted on a child or young adult or else as a result of neglect and failure to protect another person. Examples may include:

- i. severe physical punishment;
- ii. beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
- iii. pinching, biting, ear-pulling or hitting on the knuckles, scalding;
- iv. ordering a child to kneel down or stand under the sun, to crawl on their knees or to stand for excessive periods of time as punishment;
- v. terrorising a child with threats.

It is common practice in Africa to ask a child or young person to do an errand as a form of punishment, such as cutting grass, fetching water or perform some other manual work. This may have an

educational value when done appropriately. But if the length of time that a student has to do this is excessive and causes the child to miss relevant parts of his school activities that makes this practice counterproductive and abusive.

A form of abuse which is unfortunately not uncommon is to use children for labour, depriving them of their right to a regular education attending school. This phenomenon is various in its manifestation and intensity; it can lead to real form of slavery. Even if this does not occur within the premises under the direct responsibilities of those to whom this policy primarily applies, yet there is a moral duty of advocacy in favour of children who are suffering due to such situations, and one has to be ready to face the implications that standing for their rights may attract.

Unfortunately children and vulnerable adults are sometimes used for ritual practise; all should be aware of this and alert for any suspicious personalities lingering in the vicinity. It has been known that children have been snatched for this purpose, and so the cause of prolonged absenteeism should be investigated.

1.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person. It also occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Examples may include:

- i. the imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- ii. belittling the children or making fun of their physical appearance;
- iii. use of bullying or threatening language that instils fear in a child;
- iv. exposure to domestic violence;
- v. deliberate attempts to undermine and spoil the child self-image and self-confidence.

The last two instances can be prosecuted by civil law.

1.3 Sexual abuse and sexual exploitations

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include:

- i. exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child or young person;
- ii. intentional touching or molesting the body of a child or young person whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- iii. masturbation in the presence of the child or young person or the involvement of the child/minor in an act of masturbation;
- iv. sexual intercourse with the child or young person, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- v. sexual exploitation of a child or young person, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts.

Sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person is involved in the exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse and the consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

Civil law considers criminal not only the performance of the above mentioned acts but their planning as well.

1.4 Neglect

A large number of children and youth suffer from neglect due to widespread poverty and lack of basic resources in community, especially in education and health. Families very often have to

struggle to be able to meet the basic requirements and often quite a number are not able to cope, with the result that children are the first to suffer.

Very often our own institutions were established to respond to some particular need that the young people have to face, like projects with Street Children. Don Bosco's institutions as a whole are constantly trying to counter the act of neglect present in society.

Yet there is still need to talk about neglect in this document to ensure that within our own institutions every child and young person is receiving the basic care and attention that he is entitled to.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development. Examples may include:

- i. Being deprived of food, clothing, hygiene, education, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and medical care.
- ii. Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is *significant* is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

It is a long standing Salesian practice never to deprive a child or young person from partaking in a common meal as a form of punishment.

A particular form of neglect that one needs to be alert occurs when heavy accusations are laid on children, like demonic possession and witchcraft. Often they are used as scapegoats for problems originated among adults, making children the target who cannot retaliate or defend themselves. In some cases they are outcast and banished from the community with all care withdrawn. In these situations we have to speak out for the rights of the child and where necessary do our best in ensuring that the child is being cared for.

2. Guidelines on Dealing with Disclosure

The Catholic Church, including the Salesians in West Africa, is committed to promoting the safety, welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults and takes all concerns, allegations and disclosures of abuse seriously.

The following procedures set out the actions that must be taken if any concern, allegation or disclosure is made which indicates that a member of the Salesian Congregation, a member of staff or a volunteer has:

- a) behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- b) committed a criminal offence against a child or related to a child.

3. Contact Persons for reporting neglect or abuse

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the care and protection of their children. When parents/guardians do not or cannot fulfil this responsibility, it may be necessary for other educators to intervene.

The wider community also has a responsibility for the welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults. All personnel involved in organisations working with children and vulnerable adults should be alert to the possibility of abuse. They need to be aware of their obligations to convey any reasonable concerns to the appropriate authorities and to be informed of the correct procedures for doing so.

This policy attempts to make clear the responsibilities that each member of the West African Province educational settings has in respect of the welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults and also for those working under our care or employment, since supporting and safeguarding children involves the collaboration of a variety of personnel.

3.1 Provincial

The Provincial has **ultimate responsibility** to ensure that the Policy and relevant procedures are put in place, and to ensure that these are complied with. (*See third part for modality of implementation*).

3.2 Rector and Members of the Educative Pastoral Communities

The local Rector has **overall responsibility** for policy and relevant procedures at the local level, and to ensure that these are complied with. The Rector should involve the Salesian Community and all the members of the educative pastoral community, according to their different participation in the educative-pastoral work in making the policy well known and properly followed.

FROM THE MOMENT OF THE APPROVAL BY THE AFW PROVINCIAL COUNCIL THE POLICY IS A BINDING LAW FOR ALL THOSE WHO WORK WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO IN WEST AFRICA (Salesians and Salesian Sisters, employees, volunteers).

THE SIGNATURE APPENDED TO THE DOCUMENT OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE POLICY (last page) TESTIFIES THAT THE SIGNATORY AGREES TO COMPLY WITH ALL THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED THEREIN.

THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE POLICY IS A PRELIMINARY CONDITION FOR TAKING PART IN EDUCATIVE – PASTORAL ACTIVITIES WITH THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO IN WEST AFRICA¹.

¹ For the time frame of implementation see the third part.

3.3 Designated Person (DP) and the Deputy Designated Person (DDP)

A Designated Person (DP) and a Deputy Designated Person (DDP) are appointed by the Provincial as point of reference for all what concerns the disclosure of abuse. Normally the DP is the Rector of the Salesian House and is the person to refer to. The DDP deals with cases where, due to certain circumstances, it would be inappropriate for the DP to intervene. The eventuality of abuses involving girls makes in fact preferable that the DDP appointed by the Provincial is a woman: this facilitate the process of disclosure. When Salesian presences are geographically close the same person can serve as DDP for more than one setting and the Provincial and the Rector ensure that details of the DDP are well known.

The Rector of the house, while acting as DP, will keep informed the Provincial of the situation and its unfolding from the outset. In special situations the Provincial may ask another confrere instead than the Rector to take over the DP responsibility for a particular case (disclosure and all related issues).

- a) DPs (or DDPs) promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- b) DPs /DDPs are to have completed appropriate training relevant to their role.
- c) **DPs /DDPs do not investigate**, but **they do inform** the Provincial upon receipt or notification of an allegation, suspicion or concern about the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, current or historical, and to follow the reporting guidelines. The Investigation will be the direct responsibility of the Response Commission, as explained in detail on the second chapter of the fourth part of this policy.
- d) It is the DPs /DDPs responsibility to receive information where it is alleged that a child/children or vulnerable adult(s) has been or have been abused. DPs /DDPs will also assist with practical matters the appropriate authorities when the follow up of the case will demand it.

- e) The DPs /DDPs must not take on the role of Support Person to the person raising a concern, nor should they take on the role of advisor to the respondent.
- f) The DPs /DDPs should be widely known so that everyone knows who to go to in the event that they have a concern about a child, vulnerable adult or other safeguarding issue, and for children disclosing abuse.

4. Making a disclosure

1. If a child alleges that (s)he is being harmed or is at risk of harm from a parent/ guardian or any other person, then the person receiving the information should listen carefully and supportively. The same would apply if a parent/ guardian or any other person discloses that he or she has harmed or is at risk of harming a child.
2. **Absolute confidentiality should never be promised to a person making a disclosure** as this could prevent appropriate action being taken in respect of the child and the abuser.
3. If the disclosure is made to a lay person, or volunteer he/she should refer the matter immediately to the DP or DDP. If none of these are present the matter should be referred to a member of the Salesian community, who should refer the matter to the Provincial or his Vicar without delay.
4. The person receiving the first disclosure needs to gather sufficient information to establish grounds for concern, to record the conversation accurately and then inform the Designated Person who is responsible for reporting the matter.
5. It is appropriate to have another adult person when doing the interview to act as a witness. If the child making the complaint is female this other adult should be female.

6. Whatever the content of what is reported, those who listen and record the disclosure should not show shock, horror or disbelief. They write down the details as clearly and dispassionately as possible.
7. It is not their function to investigate or comment upon the complainant's allegation.
8. If the complainant is an adult he/she should be asked what he/she would like to do with this disclosure, while making sure that he/she knows that they have a right/duty to report the allegation to the appropriate authority, safeguarding privacy and discretion and acting in respect of the law.

How to record a complaint

1. The correct name, residence and phone number of the complainant for whom the report is being made;
2. the date and time of the meeting;
3. the date and place where the alleged abuse(s) took place;
4. the nature of the abuse (sexual, physical, emotional and neglect);
5. the name and contact details of the person reporting concerns and any other person present at the meeting;
6. the name of the alleged abuser;
7. a full account of what constitutes the grounds for concern in relation to the protection and welfare of the complainant, e.g. details of the allegation, incident, dates, description of any injuries, etc;
8. the age of the complainant at the time of the abuse;
9. Those recording the disclosure have to establish whether the complainant and the alleged abuser are still in contact.
10. If there is ground to believe that the complainant is under 18 the correct names of the complainants' parents/guardians,

telephone number and the place where they can be contacted has to be recorded. The complainant has to be informed that his/her parents/guardians will be asked to be present during further meetings.

11. Facts are to be recorded in a detailed and accurate manner as stated by the complainant;
12. Any other relevant information has to be recorded.

THIRD PART:
sexual abuse not involving Minors

Pastoral functionaries and Educators have the ability to affect persons' lives in ways that few others can. Clergy and consecrated persons occupy a unique place in the lives of many people. Priests or direct collaborators in the Church and Educators in the Salesian tradition are commonly seen as shepherds and the parishioners or young people as flock: this image, even if it has evangelical reference, illustrates the imbalance of power and authority between the parties. The first are viewed as trusted members of society. Because of this power imbalance, the faithful member of the Christian community or the youngster in the educative setting may be considered to be in a vulnerable position.

Abusive/Inappropriate Relationships

1. Sexual contact or activity within a pastoral – educational relationship creates a dual relationship that is both a love relationship and a pastor-congregant or educator-student relationship. Dual relationships undercut any possibility of an effective pastoral educative relationship. Such a relationship is based on the confidence that pastoral functionaries or educators will not misuse their knowledge and betray the trust reposed in them.
2. Pastoral functionaries and Educators are expected to behave in an exemplary way even in their social life and activities. When social relationships in the pastoral and educative context become sexualized, even with consent, they are to be considered inappropriate, unacceptable and possibly scandalous.
3. Because of the existing power imbalance, sexual misconduct in a pastoral – educational relationship is to be considered always inappropriate, even with consent.
4. Abusive sexual conduct may give rise to criminal prosecution which may result in the imprisonment of the abuser.

Measures

1. The same procedures of the investigations into allegations dealing with child sexual abuse will be applied in the case of sexual abuse or misconduct with adults *mutatis mutandis*.
2. The identity of a minor involved in case of sexual abuse must always be protected from any kind of publicity (name, picture...) at all the stages of the process. Nevertheless even when the victim insists that anonymity be safeguarded, the person first informed about the sexual abuse or misconduct will ensure that the case is reported to the Chairman of the Response Commission, who will guarantee that the procedure is carried out according to this policy, both in regard to child protection and in regard to the safeguard of privacy, in the limits and injunctions set by the law.
3. The settlement of cases of misdemeanors versus minor causing them harm (offences, felonies, major offences) has to be done in accordance with the law of each Country (which defines to which extent settlement can be done by ADR – alternative dispute resolution - and when they have to be dealt in a Court of Law).
4. The distinction between abusive and inappropriate adult sexual relationship is important in determining:
 - i. the degree of guilt;
 - ii. the kind of treatment and measures to be recommended;
 - iii. the eventual counseling that could be suggested to the adult victim.

FOURTH PART: IMPLEMENTATION

1. Implementing Child Protection Policy

Provincial + Council

Approve policy + makes appointments + review policy & procedures + annual evaluation

Provincial Animation and Awareness

Provision of training; advising on safeguarding practice

Monitoring implementation of policy and providing up-to-date best practices advice

Designated Person (DP) and Deputy Designated Person (DDP)

One Confrere (normally the Rector) and one appointed Lady for each Salesian presence (including one or more houses), who manage all aspects concerning the disclosure of abuse.

Response Commission

The commission is bound to intervene as soon an abuse is reported. The first act is the Opening Inquiry, which ends in a Preliminary Statement, where the procedure for the follow up is defined.

The Official Investigation, when needed, is cared for by the Commission, which at the end makes recommendations to the Provincial.

Provincial and Chairman of the Response Commission ensure that the due report to the competent authority is done (Civil authority, Diocese, Generalate, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) according to the nature of the finding of the investigation and that the implementation of the directives that may come from these authorities is thoroughly done.

Support Person

As needed, a support person (male or female) is made available to those who make an allegation/disclosure.

Adviser

As needed, an adviser is made available to the respondent.

2. The Response Commission

As general principle reported cases must always be attended to according to the steps and the timing stipulated in this policy. Failure to do so is itself an offence.

2.1 Membership

The Response Commission is composed of the Vicar of the Provincial, who act as a Chairman of the commission, a senior confrere appointed by the Provincial after hearing the opinion of his Council, an expert in Canon Law (if this is not the field of competence of the two Salesians already mentioned), a person with competence in counselling and psychology and a Civil Lawyer. The members can be chosen on a country basis, to facilitate the work of the commission where it is needed.

The Response Commission does not need to act collegially at every step of its mandate. The Chairman coordinates the work of the Commission.

2.2 Mandate

The Commission acts on the mandate of the Provincial and his Council from the moment in which it is officially established. Its intervention is due when a case of abuse is brought to the Provincial.

Its mandate expires when a new Response Commission is appointed by the Provincial. In this way it is assured the continuity of the service the Commission is called to render.

The Commission follows the basic policy regarding child protection and abuse as they are stated in the Child Protection Policy document of the Province. The Commission should also make recommendations to the Provincial and his Council to update such policy as the need arises. It is the prerogative of the Provincial with

the consent of his Council to modify the Child Protection Policy of the Province.

The major task of the Response Commission is to investigate allegations and complaints. At the conclusion of its investigation the Commission should present its findings and recommendations to the Provincial and his Council.

2.3 Time frame for the implementation

The time frame for the implementation is as follows:

- i. 18th August 2012: approval of the Policy by the AFW Provincial Council.
- ii. Presentation and awareness period: September 2012 – March 2013
- iii. Deadline for submission of the copies of the documents of acceptance to the Provincial Secretary: 3rd April 2013
- iv. 2015: evaluation and revision of the policy by the AFW Provincial Council.

**ACCEPTANCE of AFW CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY Document and Procedures**

Surname Forename

Date of birth

Address

.....

.....

Contact Telephone Number

Involvement with children (educative/pastoral role)

.....

.....

Location of this work

I have read, understood and I accept the AFW Child Protection Policy and I agree to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document. I am fully aware of the implications attached to the infringement of what the Policy prescribes.

Signed

Date

Completed form to be returned to the Rector and copy forwarded to the AFW Provincial Secretary.



AFW Province

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