

## **Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct**

These Child Protection Guidelines and the Child Protection Code of Conduct apply to projects and activities of the Zentrum *polis* - Politik lernen in der Schule (short: Zentrum *polis*), as well as the supporting association of the Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights (short: Vienna Forum).

The Child Protection Guideline and the Child Protection Code of Conduct were developed by ECPAT Austria, a children's rights alliance for the protection of children against sexual exploitation and part of the international network represented in 82 countries, and adopted by Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum. The work of ECPAT is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its additional protocols.

The aim of the Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum is to strengthen and to promote the rights of children and their participation in society through its work in the field of human rights research as well as through human rights teaching, training and consulting.

The Child Protection Guideline and the Child Protection Code of Conduct are adopted for all employees as well as for contractors and cooperation partners.

In this context, the Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum commits itself according to the guidelines of ECPAT International to protect persons up to 18 years of age against all forms of exploitation and sexual, emotional and physical abuse as well as neglect.

In particular, the Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum ensures,

- that employees and volunteers are carefully selected;
- that employees and volunteers have knowledge about child protection and prevention of (sexual) violence or can acquire this knowledge through internal training;
- that an internal reporting and crisis procedure is in place in case of suspected assaults by own employees or volunteers and that the employees are aware of it.

Das Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum commits itself,

- to respect children as individuals and to create and/or maintain a safe, supportive and encouraging environment for them, in which they are listened to.
- Never abuse the power given or influence over a child's life and well-being.
- not to sexually, physically, or emotionally abuse or exploit a child.
- to ensure that, in the course of their professional activities, employees or caregivers do not engage in sexual acts with children or exploit relationships of authority to this end.
- refrain from any form of threat, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or unequal treatment.
- employees follow these principles in their dealings with children, including in their private lives.

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1 According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, "children" in the context of special protection needs are all persons who have not yet reached the age of 18.



Anything that endangers or harms children must be refrained from. This includes, in particular:

- holding, petting, kissing, squeezing or touching children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive manner;
- physical contact with children beyond that which is professionally necessary;
- using inappropriate, indecent or abusive language, making appropriate suggestions or offering advice;
- make sexual innuendos or ambiguous actions toward a child, even in jest;
- helping a child with intimate tasks (personal hygiene) without being asked to do so, when the child can do it on his or her own;
- Insulting, humiliating, belittling or otherwise emotionally abusing children;
- discriminate against children;
- condone or participate in illegal, dangerous, or abusive behaviour toward children; or participate in it.

All employees of Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum are informed about the Child Protection Guidelines and the Code of Conduct, new employees are informed about it when they start their employment.

When selecting contractors and cooperation partners, the Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum takes special care with regard to these Child Protection Guidelines and informs contractors and cooperation partners about the principles of the Child Protection Guidelines and the Code of Conduct.

Resolution of the Zentrum *polis* / Vienna Forum  
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