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# Dialogue Tool for Enhancing Child Safeguarding



## Introduction

Embarking on the journey of establishing a safeguarding system that promotes a consistent culture of protection and care in smaller organisations can seem like a daunting task. A first step can be to create a common understanding of what are child safeguarding concerns and possible actions to be taken to mitigate the risk.

The aim of this dialogue tool is to bring project staff, board members and volunteers into a safe space where they can discuss issues, share experiences, and identify needed action to ensure that the work they do will live up to the vision they have of supporting children while upholding the 'Do No Harm' principle.

As safeguarding concerns are often sensitive topics, it will be important to go into the discussions carefully and gradually. The dialogue tool uses the Facts, Association, Meaning and Action Learning Dialogue approach (FAMA), which promotes behaviour change from within, through a participatory group discovery process leading towards possible action.

This dialogue tool for participatory group learning can also be used to enhance community dialogue about child protection. If necessary, adjust the questions to fit your specific context.

The dialogue cards deal with safeguarding at three different levels:

1. Defining child abuse
2. Investigating what is appropriate conduct for staff and volunteers in the organisation
3. Investigating how to set up a robust safeguarding system in the organisation

Trigger warning: The images and questions might be disturbing to participants who might have personal experiences with physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Make sure to never pressure participants to speak. If possible, as a facilitator, encourage participants to not share personal details but keep the examples anonymous. Allow for a safe and confidential space for follow up if necessary.

## Dialogue steps

The dialogue will be guided by a picture and a set of questions:

- Pick a card that you find appropriate to start with. There is no right or wrong order but be aware that some relate to defining what child abuse is, while others deal with personal and organisational responsibilities of safeguarding.
- Show the chosen picture to the group.
- Using the questions on the back of the card, you can initiate a conversation about the **FACTS** of the picture: Of what is seen in the picture and how the people in the picture might feel. This creates a safe way for participants to engage in; they can start talking without feeling pressured to reveal any personal details.
- Next, the group will be asked questions that will guide them towards making **ASSOCIATIONS** to experiences that the picture makes them think of. It will open an opportunity for participants to learn from each other and for new insights. The questions and answers can also reveal different perspectives among participants. It is ok to not agree, but it is important to listen.
- As a third step, participants are led to investigate the **MEANING** of the issue; is this something that is experienced at a broader, societal level? Why is that?
- Finally, the discussion will be guided towards finding out what **ACTIONS** should be taken to find solutions, both at a personal and organisational level.

**TIP:** You can print and laminate the cards so that they are reusable.

[childprotectionnetwork.dk/](http://childprotectionnetwork.dk/)



Illustrations by **Jan Oksbøl Callesen**.



# Defining child abuse: **Exploitation (Child labour)**

The project includes the building of a latrines in a local community, but the contractor engages school-age children to carry the heavy loads of bricks and cement during school hours

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a child safeguarding and/or child protection concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the working children?
- How does this affect their families?
- What will happen to the contractor?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Defining child abuse: **Online exploitation**

The organisation runs an online learning programme for children in remote villages, but a staff member gets access to the platform and sells the password to a local child abuse mafia gang.

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a child safeguarding and/or child protection concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the children in the villages?
- What will happen to the staff member?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Defining child abuse: **Serious neglect**

In a project that supports foster care and kinship care, a child in a foster family is singled out from the other children in the family and does not receive care, food and education (The neglect is purposeful and detrimental to health & well-being)

## **Facts**

To Help People Reflect On And Discuss What They See In The Picture.

- What Do You See In The Picture?
- What Is Happening?
- Can You Tell A Story About What You Think Is Going On?
- Is There A Child Safeguarding And/Or Child Protection Concern?

## **Association**

To Help People Connect The Situation In The Picture To Their Experience.

- Does This Remind You Of Anything You Have Seen, Heard Or Experienced?

## **Meaning**

To Help People Identify And Discuss The Meaning Of The Depicted Situation, The Lessons To Be Learned, And The Principles At Play.

- How Often Does Something Like This Happen?
- How Will This Affect The Child In Care?
- What Will Happen To The Foster Parents?
- How Does This Kind Of Behaviour Affect You?
- How Does It Affect The Organisation?
- What Can We Learn From This Story?

## **Action**

To Encourage People To Take Action.

- What Can Be Done To Address This Situation?
- What Would Be The First Step?
- Should You Work Alone Or With Others?
- Will A Safeguarding Policy Help The Situation?
- Will A Complaints Mechanism Help The Situation?
- What Will Be Important To Take Into Account?





# Defining child abuse: **Sexual exploitation**

A tutor in the project takes advantage of a young participant in a vocational skills course by pressuring her to have sex to get the graduation certificate (non-graphic depiction)

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story of what you think is going on?
- Is there a child safeguarding and/or child protection concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the student? Her parents?
- What will happen to the tutor?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Defining child abuse: **Physical violence**

The project is teaching street children to read and write but the teacher is using physical disciplining when the students make mistakes in their school work.

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a child safeguarding and/or child protection concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the street children?
- What will happen to the teacher?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Code of conduct for organisational staff: Ethical considerations for actions outside of work time (Early and forced marriage / child labour)

The programme manager goes home from the organisation's office to his under-age wife  
(Or, if too unlikely in the social context of the organisation:

The programme manager goes home from the organisation's office to his home where a  
school-age girl is working as domestic help)

## Facts

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

## Association

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## Meaning

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to  
be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- Is this acceptable behaviour in the social / cultural context?
- How will this affect the young girl?
- How do you think her parents assess the situation?
- What will happen to the programme manager?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## Action

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy and a code of conduct help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Code of conduct for organisational staff:

## Discrimination

The social worker in the project is from the majority ethnic-religious group and favours members of her own group in the programme activity of the project, so a young minority boy is left excluded.

### Facts

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

### Association

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

### Meaning

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the young boy?
- How does this affect his family?
- What will happen to the social worker?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

### Action

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?





# Code of conduct for volunteers: **Romance with a young project participant**

A 21-year-old volunteer from the Danish partner organisation is facilitating workshops for 15-year-old entrepreneurs as part of the project team of the local partner organisation. She organises extra help for a particular student whom she finds attractive and eventually they start dating.

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the young student?
- What will happen to the volunteer?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Code of conduct during field visits:

## Taking photos without consent

Board members of the Danish partner organisation are visiting for a monitoring trip and taking photos, without consent of children in vulnerable situations, for their newsletter.

### Facts

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

### Association

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

### Meaning

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the vulnerable children?
- What will happen to the board members?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

### Action

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?



# Organisational child safeguarding system: Insufficient complaints mechanism

A young female workshop participant feels uncomfortable when the trainer touches her inappropriately, but when she drops a complaint in the box, the director of the local partner organisation is the one to read the notes. He threatens to exclude her from the training if she does not drop the complaint.

## Facts

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

## Association

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## Meaning

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the young girl?
- What will happen to the trainer?
- What will happen to the director?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## Action

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a different / additional complaints mechanism help the situation?



# Organisational child safeguarding system: **Arbitrary recruitment procedures**

The director of the local partner organisation is responsible for hiring the new field worker but fails to check references to ensure that there are no former cases of child abuse.

## **Facts**

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

## **Association**

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## **Meaning**

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the children your organisation works with?
- What will happen to the new hire?
- What will happen to the director?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## **Action**

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?





# Organisational child safeguarding system: non-reporting on abuse

An employee in the partner organisation observes the driver showing inappropriate content on social media to children in the project while waiting in a village. However, she does not report the incidence for fear of losing her employment in the project.

## Facts

To help people reflect on and discuss what they see in the picture.

- What do you see in the picture?
- What is happening?
- Can you tell a story about what you think is going on?
- Is there a safeguarding concern?

## Association

To help people connect the situation in the picture to their experience.

- Does this remind you of anything you have seen, heard or experienced?

## Meaning

To help people identify and discuss the meaning of the depicted situation, the lessons to be learned, and the principles at play.

- How often does something like this happen?
- How will this affect the exposed children?
- What will happen to the driver?
- What will happen to the other employee who observed the incidence?
- How does this kind of behaviour affect you?
- How does it affect the organisation?
- What can we learn from this story?

## Action

To encourage people to take action.

- What can be done to address this situation?
- What would be the first step?
- Should you work alone or with others?
- Will a safeguarding policy help the situation?
- Will a complaints mechanism help the situation?
- What will be important to take into account?