

# CHILD and ADULT Safeguarding Policy of Voluntary Health Association of Tripura (VHAT)

Circuit House Area, P.O.- Kunjaban, Agartala-799006, Tripura, India

*(This policy was approved by the Executive Committee of VHAT in the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022. Again it was placed in 34<sup>th</sup> AGM for the approval of the General Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2022, where this policy was approved unanimously by the General Committee)*

---

## **Acknowledgements:**

This policy has been developed from:

- VHAT child safeguarding policy 2020
- The CBM Child Protection Policy of 2014 revised;
- The CBM child and adult-at-risk safeguarding reporting form

**Voluntary Health Association of Tripura**, an institution belonging to the congregation of helping children and adults takes the view that any form of violence against children and adults is unacceptable. VHAT is committed to prevent and protect children from all forms of abuse namely physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. This includes other forms of abuse such as bullying, corporal punishment, child grooming and exposing them to, or using them for pornography, witchcraft and ritualistic abuse, spiritual abuse and harmful traditional practices, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse/ harassment/exploitation etc. whatever the type of violence used only a clear and consistent policy framework can prevent and fight against such forms of abuse. In all of our projects, we are committed to ensure that every child and adult enjoys the benefit of a protective environment in which their rights are respected. This is why we update our rules relating to children's rights on a regular basis, integrating the highest requirements according to international and standards and current best practices. It is with this in mind that we are broadening the existing safeguarding mechanisms to include adults- at- risk and which we wish to see applied to all of our organisations activities. This means our existing child safeguarding/protection policy, code of conduct, complaints mechanisms, human resource processes, safeguarding training and project risk assessment and mitigations shall all incorporate safeguarding of adults- at-risk.

Therefore, particular attention is given, for example, to hiring new staff, inclusion of social media and new reporting and communication tools. An annual plan of action reflecting child and adult-at-risk safeguarding measures within the delegations ensures that the system is implemented properly.

The current CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY contains a new code of conduct to be signed by all **Voluntary Health Association of Tripura(VHAT)** collaborators (employees, temporary employees or volunteers, field staff, rehabilitation staff, supporting staff, interns etc)

We firmly believe that the systematic use of this Policy is the best way to ensure that all children and adult-at-risk receive the necessary protection to which they are entitled.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Welcome to the child and adult-at-risk safeguarding policy and its procedures, which will apply to all operations and activities conducted by, or on behalf of, both the centres in our work in India.

The policy reaffirms and strengthens our commitment as an organisation towards keeping children and adult-at-risk safe and protecting them from all forms of harms and abuse. This is an issue critical importance for VHAT and we see that the protection of children and adult-at-risk, the protection of their wellbeing and upholding their rights as the foundation of their work.

## **DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING:**

Safeguarding is a set of organisational policies, procedures and practices designed to ensure that no harm comes to people as a result of contact with an organisation's programmes,

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

operations or people. VHAT has established safeguarding policies, procedures and practices to ensure the safety and dignity all individuals that engage with VHAT as an organisation and its programmes.

**In practice this means:**

- Taking preventative steps in operations and programmes to ensure a safe environment for children and adults.
- Ensuring concerns and allegations about abuse, neglect and exploitation are appropriately handled.

**WHO IS A CHILD?**

A child is as anyone below the age of 18 years.

**WHAT IS CHILD SAFEGUARDING?**

Child safeguarding is the responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programs do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

(Keeping Children Safe Coalition- [www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk](http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk) )

This includes both preventive actions to minimise the chances of harm occurring, and responsive actions to ensure that incidents which may happen are appropriately handled. Safeguarding implies a wider duty of care towards children rather than upholding their right to protection (as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)- but it is primarily concerned with harm and wellbeing, rather than with the promotion and protection of the child rights generally.

**WHO IS AN ADULT?**

A person who is aged 18 years and older. Note that an adult with or without disabilities has the same legal capacity.

**WHO IS AN ADULT-at-risk?**

Anyone over 18 years who may be at risk:

- Because of abuse or exploitation due to their reliance on others for services, basic needs or protection.
- When in a relationship (social or work) with another who seeks to misuse their position of authority or trust to control, coerce, manipulate or dominate them.
- If their decision-making capacity is impaired and/or they do not have the support to make a decision.

**WHAT IS ADULTS-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING?**

Safeguarding an adult means protecting the person's right to live in safety, free from abuse, neglect and harassment. In practice this means:

- Taking preventative steps in operations and programmes to ensure a safe environment for adults-at-risk.
- Creating an environment where communities are enabled to understand their right to live safe and secure lives, the behaviours they should expect and how they should be treated by others.
- Ensuring concerns and allegations are appropriately handled. Principles of safeguarding adults-at-risk based on international guidelines
- The UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities and its protocols (2006) □ Secretary-General's Bulletin: Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13) □ Good humanitarian practice from IASC Task Force and Sphere Standards.

**PURPOSE OF CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY:**

The aim of the policy and procedures is to expand the existing CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY and to regulate how we work as an organisation so that the children and adult with which we come into contact (either directly or indirectly) are safeguarded and have their wellbeing promoted, and that our actions, while implementing programs or institutional activities, do not cause any harm to them.

*Silpa Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

## **WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:**

This safeguarding policy is a mandatory policy that applies to management, teaching staff, supporting staff, rehabilitation staff, volunteers, interns, parents\*\*\*

## **CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY:**

Policy Statement of Voluntary Health Association of Tripura: It is of paramount concern of the congregation of Voluntary Health Association of Tripura that in our institution we become for the young signs and bearers of God's love. Therefore it is important that all those who are involved in the work of projects in our organisation, including the management, staff, supporting staff volunteers and other visiting faculties support the rights of children and adults-at-risk to ensure that a safe and inclusive environment that promotes learning and growth in an atmosphere of spontaneity and freedom is maintained. As the VHAT are committed to protecting the rights and dignity of children and adults-at-risk regardless of gender, ethnicity, political association, religion, sexual orientation and whether or not they have a disability.

## **PRINCIPLES UNDERSTANDING OUR CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY:**

Our safeguarding policy is based upon a number of principles and beliefs, including:

- All children and adults have equal rights to protection and to have their wellbeing and participation promoted.
- All actions regarding child and adult-at-risk safeguarding must be taken in the best interest of children and adult. This includes an understanding that in all our programs and activities we must ensure that we respect children and adults rights and do not cause harm.
- Everybody has a responsibility for safeguarding. This policy is mandatory for all those who work for or on behalf of VHAT. Although training, advice and support will be provided, everyone should actively participate so that they can carry out their responsibilities towards safeguarding of children and adult.
- We work in a transparent and open way where child and adult-at-risk safeguarding is made apriority, recognising that situations of abuse and harm are able to flourish when staff, volunteers, partners, children, families and community members do not feel able to raise their concerns.
- All reports of concern regarding the safety and protection of a child/adult will be taken seriously. Where necessary appropriate steps will be taken to protect against the alleged perpetrator. This may include referrals to law enforcements and child protection agencies. In relation to allegations against staff, volunteers, interns' action may also include the suspension or termination of engagement or any type of cooperation.
- No single organisation is able to safeguard children and adult-at-risk by working in isolation, and therefore we will work with other organisations, agencies, government stakeholders and groups as necessary and appropriate.
- We maintain confidentiality and do not disclose personal details of those involved in child and adult-at-risk protection concerns, including the names of those raising concerns unless it is necessary to pass on information to ensure that a child or an adult is protected.
- We raise awareness and influence others on the importance of safeguarding children and adults-at-risk, using our policy and procedures as a way of both highlighting our commitment and also of explaining our values. We will share our policy and procedures with others, and be open to feedback regarding its application and relevance.
- We work within the framework of international and national laws and policies regarding safeguarding

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

- There is no one specific way of safeguarding children and adults-at-risk and promoting their rights. Solutions to protecting children and adults-at-risk need to reflect the culture and operating environment and the nature of activities being undertaken. However, culture can never be used as an excuse for abuse.

#### DIFFERENT TYPES OF ABUSES

	CHILD	ADULT
Physical abuse	As defined by the Ministry of Women and child welfare, in its study on child abuse, physical abuse is “inflicting of physical injury upon a child, this may include slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating or otherwise harming a child in any way physically even when the parent or the caretaker may have not intended to harm the child. It may, even the result of over disciplining or physical punishment that is inappropriate to the child’s age.	Physical abuse is when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure another adult. The abuse may result from a single or repeated incident. Examples include, but are not limited to, inflicting pain, punching, kicking, burning, hitting and unnecessary restraint and other traditional harmful practices.
Emotional abuse	Any type of persistent emotional ill treatment of a person so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on one’s emotional development, would be emotional abuse. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. This may be expressed verbally or non-verbally or via electronic or written communication or any other form. Emotional abuse include verbal abuse, mental abuse and psychological maltreatment. This can include parents/ caretakers using extreme and/or bizarre forms of punishments, such as confinement in a closet or dark room, or being tied to a chair, for a long period of time or threatening or terrorizing a child. Less severe acts but no less damaging are, belittling or refusing treatment using derogatory terms to describe the child, habitual tendency to blame the child or making him/her a scapegoat.	Emotional abuse is the failure to provide a supportive environment that allows an adult to receive the support needed to develop a range of emotional competencies, in line with their personal potential and in the context of the society in which they live. It occurs within the relationship between two or more people, and is not a specific event, but a pattern of events.
Sexual abuse	According to “Child Abuse:India 2020”, sexual abuse is inappropriate sexual behaviour with a child. It includes fondling of child’s genitals, making the child fondle the adult’s genitals, intercourse, incest, rape sodomy, exhibitionism, and sexual exploitation. To be considered, “Child Abuse”, these acts have to be committed by a person responsible for the care of a child or related to the child. When these acts are committed by a stranger it is considered as sexual assault.	Sexual abuse is when an adult is forcefully involved in a sexual activity that he or she does not consent to or fully comprehend and feels powerless to refuse. Examples include, but are not limited to, forced prostitution, unlawful acts including sexual activity, violent sexual assault, grooming, and pornography.
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial by a parent or caregiver to provide a	Neglect is when an adult is deliberately denied or persistently

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

	<p>child with the necessities for its good health and development. Child neglect is abandonment of a child by parent, institution/guardian. It is depriving the child of care by not providing appropriate and necessary food, shelter, clothing, medical care and supervision. Child act is an act of omission or provide appropriate schooling or special educational needs. Whereas not providing emotional support and love to a child would be psychological neglect.</p>	<p>refused access to the necessities of life (health, education, nutrition, shelter, safe living conditions, sanitation and supervision) to the extent that the person's development is placed at risk. Examples include, but are not limited to withholding medical care, refusing to provide basic physical needs, or providing a lower standard of care and support to an individual than is required. However, neglect does not occur when a community or family are unable to provide the basic necessities such as food, shelter or clothing due to circumstances beyond their control. It would only be neglect if it was withheld from a particular family member.</p>
Exploitation	<p>Child exploitation is using a child unfairly for one's advantage. When someone grooms and controls a child for sexual purpose, it is exploitation. This involves befriending; gaining their trust, giving them drugs, alcohol or gifts and asking them perform sexual acts as a favour or in exchange for something. Grooming children online for the purpose of sexually abusing them would also be exploitation. This would involve adult befriending children through online chats, social networks, e-mail, texting etc. to gain their trusts and stalking their online activities in view of sexual involvement or any personal gain or advantage.</p>	<p>Exploitation is when an adult is used to work or perform other activities for the benefit of others. These activities are detrimental to the person's physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. Examples include, but are not limited to forced labour of adults, human trafficking of adults (when one adult arranges or facilitates the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receiving of another adult for the purpose of exploitation), forced prostitution, forced engagement in military activities (e.g. human shields).</p>

**PREVENTIVE MEASURES:**

Prevention of any incident of abuse is the most desirable thing to do. Therefore every institution should try to create an atmosphere that promotes safety and protection of those entrusted to. So that they can gradually assume responsibility for their own growth as human beings and grow up emotionally sound and become persons of conviction and character. In this regard, the institutional responsibility also includes the creation of such an environment that provides every person from any abusive incident

1. Ensuring that buildings are child friendly with adequate space, lighting, ventilation and structural design that facilitate healthy and effective supervision, as and when required surveillance equipment's may be installed.
2. Ensuring that sufficient space is provided for the children to give vent to their energy, develop their talents and learn the basics of social living and spiritual and holistic wellbeing through prayer, sports, music, dance, drama, academics, religious and moral instructions etc.
3. Ensuring that the students are always supervised through the continuous and friendly educative presence of the educator.

4. Avoiding discrimination of any kind, based on age, gender religion, status, caste, social background, disability and sexual orientation.
5. Establishing such code of conduct and practice in the areas of safety, discipline and peer respect etc. which are aimed at creating a healthy environment and preventing harmful behaviour of any kind.
6. Providing information about the rights and duties of every individual in promoting the dignity of persons and space for privacy.
7. Developing printed/display material on the nature of abusive behaviour and ensuring that the information is disseminated appropriately to all.
8. Keeping instructional material in public spaces of the institution/teaching the students so as to disseminate information about the procedure for reporting known or suspected cases of abuse.
9. Formation of CHILDREN AND ADULTS-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING committee with clearly defined role and responsibility for protecting children and adults-at-risk and encouraging an atmosphere of openness.
10. Ensuring that CHILDREN AND ADULTS-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING committee examines carefully every case of alleged abuse and evaluates all reports of abusive behaviour thus fulfilling its task responsively.
11. Appointing staff only after proper selection procedures that will include interview by a proper team of persons from Governing Body of the institution and after seeking reference from atleast two past employers.
12. Appointing staff members recess and recreation time for floor/staircase duty, playground supervision etc.
13. Regular maintenance of the surveillance equipment installed in the campus.
14. Senior students and class leaders can be made to assist in maintaining discipline and guide the other students to move in an orderly fashion so as to avoid any accidents as well as indiscipline.
15. All class rooms, laboratories, library, offices, staff rooms etc. should have windows and doors with transparent glass, in order to promote supervision
16. Teaching children to respect every human being for the genuine worth of the person to promote an attitude of reverence and appreciation of persons.
17. Child and adult safeguarding obligations are included in contract paper of the employee.
18. The 'two adult rule' shall be adhered to when interviewing children. For adults, the option to have a support person of choice should always be open.
19. Showing children and adults in their true social context and reality.
20. Images, stories and messages about boys, girls, women and men will present them in a dignified, respectful manner, portraying them as equal partners in the development process.
21. During filming and photography: • Young children should at least have their bottom half covered.12 • All other children must be clothed top and bottom. • Clothing must also be appropriate with consideration given to the child's local context and the international context in which their image will be used.
22. Consent forms will be properly stored, preferably also in soft copy.
23. Pictures, materials and personal information regarding children will be held securely and confidentiality.
24. When publishing the materials, the identity and traceability of the children will be protected, for example, use only the first name and general location like country or state.
25. If a third-party requests to use the picture, for example, a cluster or a sub-partner, they must sign an agreement to adhere to the same conditions of use for which the consent was given.
26. For attending online webinar/conferences/classes parents' permission will be taken

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

## **RESPONSIVE MEASURES AND REPORTING MECHANISM: MANAGING DISCLOSURES BY CHILDREN OR ADULTS:**

It is likely that a staff member or intern may witness or become aware of abuse, neglect and or exploitation. Below is some guidance on how to handle this.

1. Always take the allegation seriously and pay attention to the details reported.
2. Do not promise to keep the information they provide secret because you will need to inform the safeguarding focal person and those involved with investigating the incident if an investigation is instigated.
3. Under no circumstances should you try to investigate the allegation yourself. Instead, pass this information on to the Safeguarding Focal Person as soon as possible.
4. Notify the nearest Safeguarding Focal Person.
5. Report via CBM SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORTING FORM\*\*
6. Counselling/therapy for the victim at the expense of the institution, if required.
7. Contacting and facilitating such expert agencies.
8. Extension of counselling/therapy to the victim's family.
9. Keeping regular contact and with the victim and family.
10. Extension of medical facilities if needed.
11. Transfer of the victim to any other emergency facility/sister institution if desired and acceptable.
12. Offering all moral support to the victim and family.

***\*\*VHAT will adhere to the CBM SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORTING FORM***

### **CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE**

VHAT will have a child and adult-at-risk safeguarding committee to deal with all alleged cases of abuse of children or adults

1. The committee is made up of 5-6 competent persons consisting of a child and adult-at-risk safeguarding officer (focal person), a psychologist, and two or three other members endowed with wisdom and prudence; one of which should be a woman chosen from the staff or outside. One of the above members will act as the Secretary and another as the contact person.
2. The members of the committee are appointed for a term of three years renewable at the end of the term
3. The function of this committee is to ensure proper investigation of child abuse cases, especially those of sexual nature involving children/young person/adults so as to verify the guilt and innocence, to suggest penalties and provide advice etc. in keeping with the law enacted in our country.
4. This committee will notify and keep the proper authority informed of the progress of investigation of all alleged abuse cases and within a period of 90 days refer all finding to the deemed authority of the organisation.

### **POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE OFFICERS OF THE CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE OF THE INSTITUTION:**

The child and adult-at-risk safeguarding officer coordinates the task of protection envisaged by this policy in the institution and works in close collaboration with the Principal/Head of the Institution.

#### **1. Skills:**

- ✓ He/she should be a good listener
- ✓ He/she should have the ability to empathize, keep confidence and be objective
- ✓ He/she should be generally friendly and approachable
- ✓ He/she should be a person of great prudence

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

- 2. Scope:**
- ✓ He/she assumes responsibilities to ensure that the child and adult-at-risk safeguarding policy is adhered to
  - ✓ He/she ensures that any breach of the policy is promptly reported
  - ✓ He/she looks after the protection and safety of the child/young person/adult
- 3. Duties and Responsibilities child and adult-at-risk safeguarding committee:**
- ✓ The child and adult-at-risk safeguarding committee maintains a file on every case or matter it considers/investigates. Each file shall contain a written report of investigation conducted, conclusions reached with stated reasons and a final written summary to be forwarded to the Provincial level authority
  - ✓ It ensures the safe keeping of all files and the availability of the same in future when required.
  - ✓ It treats as confidential records, documents, information received from or reported by the members.
  - ✓ It directs the focal person to meet the alleged victim for the purpose of filling in details required, providing information and inviting statements.
  - ✓ It ensures that the final directives from the Provincial authority is followed up and implemented
  - ✓ He/she reports any breach of the code of protective behaviour put in place in the institution.
  - ✓ He/she is personally available and maintains a climate that encourages individuals in disclosing/ reporting any allegation of abusive behaviour.
  - ✓ He/she maintains confidentiality of all sensitive reports of concern or allegations of abusive behaviour
  - ✓ He/she ensures the confidential and safe custody of all original handwritten notes signed and dated along with all typed/printed report.
  - ✓ After the initiation of the enquiry by the proper authority of the organisation, when a child has to be interviewed, he/she will get someone professionally skilled to interview children, if such person is not available in the committee. Special care is to be taken while interviewing children/adult with Hearing/vision/intellectual/physical/psychiatric disability
  - ✓ He/she has the discretion to close the matter if there is no cooperation from the complainant or there is no sufficient reliable information and notify the same to the proper authority of the organisation. However it is to be carefully noted that post of child and adult-at-risk safeguarding officer does not empower him/her to report to legal authorities or to initiate any investigation in the name of the DIOCESAN/Province level Child protection Committee on his own without authorization by the DIOCESAN/Province level Child protection Committee

**SECRETARY:**

A secretary is appointed from among the members of the child and adult-at-risk safeguarding committee of the institution and shall record the minutes of the meetings, its deliverables and decisions as well as other relevant matters or action of the Committee.

**WHAT RECRUITMENT PROCESS:**

- Interview and screening to assess for potential risks to safeguarding of children and adults.
- All staffs are aware of their rights to provide feedback or a complaint about abuse of adults as well as children, and the duty of the organisation to respond
- Employment contract contains provisions for the suspension or transfer to other duties of any employee who is under investigation for breach of policy or code of protective behaviour obligations and provisions for sanctions or dismissal following an investigation.

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

## CODE OF PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR: (FOR THE MEMBERS AND THE STAFF :

As a staff member working in VHAT which is committed to the protection of children and adult from all form of abuse, I agree to abide by the following rules and regulations drawn up by the institution in this regard.

Accordingly I state that:

A. I shall always ensure that:

- I am open and not secretive about my activities associated with my service in the Institution.
- All children and adults are treated with respect.
- I will interact with every child/young person/adult in a manner which demonstrates respect, dignity, integrity, empathy, understanding and patience.
- I will always adopt socially appropriate adult behaviour towards children and young persons, which reflect the capacity to listen, understand and be respectful towards others.
- There will be other professional adults to supervise me, whenever there is a sleep over or a stay in a hotel/hostel during excursions or educational travels.
- The doors of the room that I am using are always open or visual access is always maintained, when I am alone with a child or young person.
- While being available to children/adults in discharging my duty in the institution, I will maintain the professional boundaries of relationship with them.
- Any physical touch will be in response to the need of a child/adult and never of an inappropriate kind whatever be the apparent need.
- I will respect any resistance to involvement from a child/young person/adult, in any activity that is not part of the legitimate service of the institution.
- My relationship with children/adults will be prudently governed respecting the age and developmental stage of a child or young person or adult.
- I will never touch a child's or young person's buttocks, genitals or breast, unless I am a certified medical practitioner and only for performing a legitimate and necessary medical action.
- I will respond to each child/young/adult as a unique creation of God, who has the right to determine his/her future.
- I will seek to establish a caring, protective, and respectful relationship with each other or young person or adult.
- I will alert about the vulnerability of certain groups of children, adults and young persons to be isolated bullied or hurt or denied of his/her rights
- I will give priority to extend care, safety and protection to every child or young person or adults in need of help through proper supervision while on duty or when necessary.
- I will physically restrain a child or young person or adult only when there exists a danger to the individual or to other individuals in the area.
- I will announce myself if legitimate business of the institution, requires me to enter any area of privacy for children or young person or adults, before entering,
- I will maintain confidential confidentiality about information known to me about a child or young person or adult-at-risk
- I will interact with a child or young person of adult, professionally in my official capacity, on the internet and social networking sites or while phoning or texting.
- I will comply with the principles and standards of Indian and international child protection policies, labouring laws and conventions.
- I will be vigilant and attentive to any harm towards children and young people and shall immediately report any concern I have of the same to the child and adult-at-risk safeguarding officer, of my institution.

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

- However, sometimes when it may be necessary to conduct physical checks of the students/adults in the institution for cell phones and other contraband materials, I will do it only when asked for or with permission and following all norms of touching (avoiding those areas of the body restricted to touch)
  - I will comply with all the procedure of the “WHAT CHILD AND ADULT-AT-RISK SAFEGUARDING AND PRECEDURES” implemented in the institution.
  - I will refer all media queries to the spokesperson designed for the task, and give no other comments.
  - I will speak up on any genuine case of abusive behaviour to the proper persons concerned viz. to the Head of the Institution/Child and Adult-at-risk safeguarding officer of the Institution no matter what, but without gossip mongering
  - I will comply with the dress code prescribed in the Institution while on duty and if there is no specified dress code. I will always come modestly and neatly dressed
- When photographing or filming or using images of community members (children and/or adults) for work-related purposes\*\*\*:
- Take care to ensure local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child and/or adult
  - Obtain informed consent prior to taking photographs or film. Where a child is the focus of the footage, informed consent must be gained from the child and the parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. An explanation of how the photograph or film will be used must be provided
  - Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children and/or adults in a dignified and respectful manner. Children and adults should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive
  - Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts
  - Ensure file labels or meta data does not reveal identifying information about a child and/or adults when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form
- \*\*\*Original publication developed by CBM. CBM is a Christian international development organisation, committed to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in the poorest communities of the world irrespective of race, gender or religious belief. [www.cbm.org](http://www.cbm.org).

#### **B. I SHALL ALWAYS AVOID:**

- Engaging in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade especially children and young persons and the institution.
- Using inappropriate, offensive, discriminatory, vulgar or abusive language when speaking specially with children/ young people/adults.
- Swearing in the presence of children or young persons or adults to prove my point of view.
- Doing things of personal nature that a child or young person or adult can do by himself/herself, such as assistance at the toilet or changing clothes.
- Entering any area of privacy for children or young people, unless legitimate business of the institution or any accident requires me to.
- Taking children or young people that I am professionally engaged with, to my own home/hotel, or sleeping in the same room or bed with any of them.
- Slapping, hitting or physically assaulting a child or young person or adult.
- Having recourse to or using disciplinary means, which are physically or emotionally derogatory to a child or young person or adult.
  - Engaging in any sexual conversation or discussing sexual activities, unless part of a legitimate lesson and discussion approved for teaching sexuality or biology related issues.

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

- Indulging in any manner of activities that are, or could be interpreted to be, aimed at any type of sexual relationship with a child or young person or adult.
- Developing a sexual relationship or one that may be deemed exploitative or abusive in nature with the children or young people.
- Indulging in behaviour with children or young people that lead to close physical contact unless it is an unavoidable part of a structured sports activity or outdoor games.
- Performing medical/physical examinations of children or young persons or adults, unless it is my legitimate professional duty or a medical emergency.
- Showing sexual oriented or inappropriate or digitalized material, such as magazines, videos, films, MMS etc. to children or young people or adult or having them on the premises of the Institution or in my possession when involved in an activity in the Institution or outside of it.
- Behaving provocatively or inappropriately with a child or young person.
- Exposing areas of my body considered private, in an inappropriate manner in the presence of children or young people or adult.
- Condoning or participating in behaviour of children or young persons that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Acting in a manner that shows unfair and differential treatment of particular children or young person/adult
- Taking photographs or video recording of children or young person or adults, without their consent and that of their parents guardians.
- Holding, kissing, cuddling or touching a child or young person in an appropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- Seeking to make contact and spend private time with any child or young person or adult even for teaching/coaching etc. outside the legitimate time allotted for that purpose, except with express consent of the head of the institution and the parents.
- Interacting with children or young person or adults I am professionally involved with, over the internet or on the social media on a regular basis.
- Using any officially or individually owned computer, mobile phone, video or still camera inappropriately, or accessing of websites that are illegal or have inappropriate content for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children or young persons.
- Hiring minors as domestic labour or cooperating with others to hire minors as domestic labour.
- Transporting children or young person or adult person, without the permission of their parents or legal guardian, except when directed by the head of the institution or his/her delegate in the event of an emergency or academic or sports related actively with proper accompanying documentation.
- Using, possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol or tobacco products when in the presence of or while supervising children or young person.
- Supplying alcohol or illegal drugs or tobacco products to children or adults.
- Discriminating against a child or young person or adult on the basis of their face, colour, gender, sexual orientation, language, status, ethnicity, nationality, cast, religion etc.
- Receiving personal gifts/money/services from individuals partaking of the services of/for or connected with the Institution, or as a condition for any service asked for because of any connection with the institution.
- Using negative enforcement strategies with children or young people or adults, such as physical punishment, derogatory or offensive comments, labelling, belittling, teasing, social exclusion, unequal, competition or unequal comparisons or setting them up in situation to cause conflict among children.

*Sikha Saha Das*

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.

- Any act that can be constructed to be a form of what is commonly referred to as “ragging” or nagging behaving towards children.
- Neglecting to take action when a child or young person or adult is in real need.
- Letting false allegations made by a child/young person/adult or about child/young person/adult go unchallenged.
- Being negligent by not speaking up for the right of any person, especially children and youth who are being abused in any way.
- Making any report that is aimed at “getting” even or “fixing” another individual and which can be termed as frivolous or vexatious in nature.

-----  
Signature & Name of the Staff  
-----

Name of the organisation: Voluntary Health Association of Tripura

Date:

*Sikha Saha Das*

( Ms. Sikha Saha Das)

President

Voluntary Health Association of Tripura

President,  
Voluntary Health Association of Tripura  
Circuit House Area, PO : Kunjaban,  
Agartala, Tripura-799006, India.