

Child Protection Policy

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1. Getting Started

1.1 What is a Child Protection Policy?

The Child Protection Policy (CPP) outlines the most appropriate practices for us to work in an ethical manner with children. It also provides a framework to respond respectfully and effectively to concerns and allegations of child safety, abuse, and exploitation.

A child is anyone under the age of eighteen (18) at the point of the incident, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Malaysian Child Act 2001.

1.2 Interpretations

The terms used in this Child Protection Policy shall be interpreted as follows unless stated to the contrary.

- **'GG'** refers to Yayasan Generasi Gemilang.
- **'Staff'** refers to the person employed by GG.
- **'Client'** refers to a child or group(s) of children, student(s), adult(s) and family(s).
- **'Affiliates'** refers to individuals or entities who provide(s) service or skills with GG.
- **'Child'** refers to anyone under the age of eighteen (18).
- **'CPP'** refers to GG's Child Protection Policy.

1.3 Why do we take CPP very seriously?

GG was established to achieve our vision of raising an exemplary next generation and empower families in Malaysia. In doing so, GG is fully committed to providing a child-safe and child-friendly environment to the best of our abilities.

Our CPP aims to protect all children whom we are in contact with from harm, abuse, or exploitation through preventative measures as the majority of GG's work involves children.

The CPP also aims to protect anyone working with children through GG from the risk of wrongful allegations and prevent unintentional harm caused to children.

1.4 Who does the CPP apply to?

GG expects everyone to be responsible and to strive to create an environment that will provide children with positive and healthy experiences. This takes effort and good practices, as well as the right attitude on the part of everyone concerned.

The practices outlined in GG's CPP apply to anyone working with children through GG, particularly the following, but not limited to:

- Staff & Board of Trustees
- Interns
- Volunteers & Partners
- Affiliates

1.5 What is GG's CPP based on?

GG's CPP aligns and upholds the following laws:

- Malaysian Government's Child Protection Policy
- The Malaysian Child Act 2001 ("Child Act")
- Malaysian Anti-Trafficking Persons Act in 2007
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("UNCRC")

1.6 Principles of GG's Child Protection Policy

- To act in the best interest of the child.
- We believe in the rights of all children for protection from abuse irrespective of race, social background, age, gender, skin colour, disability, faith, belief, sexual orientation, or nationality.
- We believe that children have the right to speak and be heard. When practically possible, children will be included as stakeholders, and their views given due consideration in matters concerning their safety and protection.
- GG believes that keeping silent is wrong if we suspect or know that a child is being abused or exploited.

2. Behavioural Protocols (Do's and Don'ts)

The children and families that GG works with are clients. Every effort must be made to ensure all interactions with clients remain strictly professional.

2.1 No exchanging personal contact information

Anyone working with children must not communicate with children using their personal social media accounts, personal handphones, or emails. This includes accepting requests initiated by children on social media platforms.

Necessary correspondence with children by designated staff, volunteers, affiliates, or interns is strictly for the purpose of executing GG's programmes and services. Inappropriate or suggestive comments and remarks will not be tolerated.

2.2 Two-adult rule

The 'two-adult' rule, wherein two or more adults will supervise and be present for all activities where children are involved, should be followed as best practice. Adults should not be alone with children in an isolated place, out of sight, except for professional counselling or intervention purposes. This could mean involving community members should it be challenging to have two GG staff be present.

However, in certain circumstances where there are insufficient adults;

- i) To ensure that any activities for children are done in a space or area that is visible to others and doors are left unlocked unless doing so could endanger GG staff and/or child(ren);
- ii) To ensure there are a minimum of 2 or more children together if they are the only adult in the situation.

We will do our utmost best to avoid 1-2-1 situations.

2.3 No photographs or recordings of children are to be taken in a personal capacity by anyone

Photographs will be taken by designated persons, where necessary. Photographs or recordings taken shall remain the sole property of GG and used only for the official purpose of GG. Partners or appointed personnel are required to obtain prior written consent from GG for the usage of photographs or recordings outside of GG (Refer to Section 3.3.1)

2.4 Disciplining children

We will not discipline a child in a way that is against the UNCRC. This means no tolerance for any form of violence against the child. Instead, we practice using words and role-modelling to motivate positive behaviour.

2.5 Limit physical touches to emergencies only

We need to be aware that we may encounter children who have experienced trauma. It is always advisable to practice the highest level of precaution and limit physical touches in the best interest of the child.

- Avoid carrying the children
- Avoid children sitting on laps
- Avoid kisses & hugs

Again, use your words to direct and encourage. Or you can give them high five!

2.6 Be an exemplary role model with our language, appearance and actions

Whether we are interacting with children or are just present within the same space as children, we must remember that children are watching us and learning all the time. In line with our mission to grow an exemplary next-generation, we must role model positive behaviour. Do not do anything in the presence of children which you would not want them to emulate.

The following practices are specifically prohibited:

- Smoking in and around the premises
- Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Behaving in an inappropriate manner (i.e.: rough play and games, gambling elements) or being sexually suggestive (i.e.: Encouraging crushes by a child. To kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate way)
- The use of inappropriate language is not permitted in the presence of the children, including words that are disrespectful, harsh, crude, threatening or that belittle and tease a child. Comments that are sexual in nature although made in jest are not permitted.
- Inappropriate language includes the words “damn”, “hell” and “stupid”
- Inappropriate dressing is not permitted. We permit wearing T-shirts with sleeves and long pants.

2.7 Raise any suspected child abuses concerns, disclosures, or cases to a GG staff immediately

In the event there are suspicions, concerns, or disclosures regarding child abuse, alert GG staff immediately.

Under no circumstances can a staff, volunteer, intern or affiliates at GG breach these boundaries.

Violation of Behavioural Protocols is a cause for termination of staff, interns and affiliates.

Volunteers in breach will be asked to stop volunteering and to leave the premise immediately.

3. Internal Controls to protect children

3.1 Recruitment and Screening

As a precautionary measure, GG requires anyone expected to have direct contact with children through our services to adhere to the following:

- Sign a personal declaration and self-disclosure form stating any criminal convictions, including spent convictions. In the best interest of children, **anyone with past convictions in crimes involving children (i.e.: child abuse, paedophilia) is not allowed to volunteer or work with GG.**¹
- GG reserves the right not to engage any applicants for hire or volunteering if background checks reveal that the person for any reason is not suitable to work with children.
- Sign and commit to our Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy stating there have been no previous convictions for abuse against children, violent behaviour, or improper conduct.
- GG reserves the right to request for Identity Card (IC) on-site for verification purposes.
- GG reserves the right to request for two character references (whom they have known for more than two years excluding family members) for screening and verification purposes.

3.2 Training

The safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff, volunteers, interns, and affiliates of GG to work safely and effectively with children.

- New staff and intern briefing will include training on GG's CPP within four (4) weeks of hiring and/or prior to their involvement in programmes for children.
- New volunteers and Affiliates briefing will include training on the CPP, which must be conducted before the commencement of their involvement in GG work.
- Where children are assisting or involved in the work of GG, their parents' consent must be sought in advance. They will receive appropriate information on the CPP at a level suitable to their age and experience. These children will always work in partnership with or participate under the supervision of an adult.
- All staff, interns, volunteers, and affiliates are expected to participate in relevant child protection training from time to time. This is to ensure their practices are exemplary and up-to-date with recommended best practices that protect children.

¹ GG is mindful on avoiding discrimination against individuals. However, this principle is maintained to avoid unnecessary risk to the children we work with. We believe it unwise to position individuals with specific criminal convictions in children- related crimes to work with children. This includes all volunteering work in GG as even through volunteering with administration, such individuals may gain access to personal information of children, thus best avoided.

3.3 Communication to and about children

3.3.1 Written & Verbal communication

Verbal or written disclosure of **information about past or present abuse** of individual children and their background to the public is **strictly prohibited** and should be limited only to the relevant GG staff on a need-to-know basis.

Personal data of children including Name, NRIC, address, and contact numbers must be:

- **Collected only** for the objective of provision of GG's services
- **Protected by limited access** on a need-to-know basis. Where required to share with external parties, the party must acknowledge compliance with the Personal Data Protection Act 2010.
- **Destroyed once** no longer needed.

3.3.2 Photographs & Recordings

Context

GG's imagery style is built on portraying hope and dignity. We will only display images of children whom we help that are decent and respectful, never depicting children as victims.

Imagery used must be relevant to the objective of the overall content of the publication, and never misleading.

Where photographs of children groups are used in public, GG will take special care to protect the children's identities **OR** the geographic location in all materials.

Consent

GG upholds that children have a right to privacy and their voice matters. Where an image depicts an **individual child**, we will:

- Obtain written consent from parents or caregivers; and
- Protect the child's identity and the geographic location in all materials.

We believe in going the extra mile as an advocate and protector of children rights.

<p>PERMITTED IMAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group shots • Side profile and back – no identifiable faces • Individual shots with consent
<p>PROHIBITED IMAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children must be decently clothed. Where the upper or lower portion of the child's body is unclothed, no pictures are to be taken or used • Poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive must be avoided • Discriminatory and degrading language should be avoided • Never publicly display pictures of children in vulnerable situation² • Children under the care of government institutions (refer Section 3.3.3)

² Poses depicting children in images of poverty or strife, such as begging or being touched in sensitive areas. Images of children in brothels and other such areas are also forbidden.

3.3 Communication to and about children

3.3.3 Restrictions on reporting & publication under Section 15 of the Child Act 2001 Malaysia

GG will not publish stories, images, or recordings of children under the care of Government Institutions in accordance to Section 15 of the Child Act 2001 Malaysia.

Mass media reports shall not reveal the name, address or educational institution or any particulars calculated to lead to the identification of any child concerned in matters mentioned in Section 15(1).

No pictures of the child or any other person, place or thing which may lead to the identification of any child concerned in matters mentioned in Section 15(1).

Matters mentioned in Section 15(1)

- a) any step taken against a child concerned or purportedly concerned in any **criminal act or mission**, be it at the pre-trial, trial, or post-trial stage;
- b) any child in respect of whom **custody is taken** under Part V; (Children in need of care and protection);
- c) any child in respect of whom any of the **offence** specified in the First Scheduled has been or is suspected to have been committed; or
- d) any **proceedings** under Part VI (Children in need of protection and rehabilitation)

3.3.4 Sharing of Communications with External Parties

Where GG is required to share communication about children in reporting to funders, government, or other stakeholders, the following policies apply:

- Images and reports shared with external parties are only for official purposes deemed necessary. All reports and images shared must be fully compliant with section 3.3.1 – 3.3.3 above.
- GG forbids external stakeholders from taking or recording any images of children during the children's participation in the programme or services operated by GG.
- External parties who wish to use photographs or recordings with children must sign an agreement with GG. The agreement includes terms for the proper use of the material, and any unauthorised use may result in legal action. If an individual or organisation fails to adhere to the agreement, GG may revoke permission and require the return or destruction of all materials containing the photograph.