

How *staff should keep children safe (Last written in June 2010)

Words following an* are described at the end

Introduction

*SIL wants very much to keep children safe and well. *SIL tries to look after children well with love in a safe environment. Then children can become all that they are able to be. *SIL tries to appreciate children and to see them in a positive way. *SIL also tries to give respect and care to children.

Also, a common set of standards will protect *adults who mix with children. If *adults follow this advice, their actions are visible to other people. Then the *adults are likely to be free from wrong reports of doing something bad. *Staff need to set and to keep limits when mixing with children. The limits need to be clear and suitable.

What we say here fits with international definitions and standards. This is because our *staff come from many different countries. The organisations which set those definitions and standards are:

- the International Society for the *Prevention of Child Abuse and *Neglect (ISPCAN) and
- the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

IPSCAN tries to stop and to treat the abuse of children and the *neglect of children. IPSCAN does this world-wide. IPSCAN also tries to stop people from taking unfair advantage of children. IPSCAN is the only international group that has a big mixture of people with different skills in these subjects. Those people work hard for IPSCAN.

UNCRC is based on a mixture of legal systems and cultural traditions. UNCRC sets out standards and rules which countries have agreed all over the world. So the standards and rules are not open to change. These basic standards set out what governments should do as a minimum for the freedom of children. The mission of the United Nations Children's *Fund (UNICEF) is to encourage this standard. 192 countries of the 195 countries in the world today are members of the United Nations.

*SIL also works a lot with other Christian groups on this subject. They agree to use similar definitions and standards of behavior.

*SIL has promised to obey local rules about looking after children. Those rules may be more than what is written here. If so, *SIL must follow the local rules.

We do not want to say too much about how parents should bring up their children. But we want to give advice that is short and clear. Also this advice is written in the language known as English. So this advice must be easy for speakers of English to understand. There are other groups which also want the best for children. What we say must fit with them. We assume that each person will use this advice wisely at home and at work.

The best way to keep children safe is to be aware of any danger. Doing what is said here will help to keep children safe from abuse.

We want *staff to do the things which are set out below. But this is not a complete list.

At work with children

You should do at least one of the things which are set out below. But you should try to do as many of them as possible. This will reduce the risk to children. People will see that you are serious about your work. And people will see that you are acting wisely. The result will be that you mix with children in a good way.

1. Let other *adults see you

Plan your work so that you reduce any risk to children as much as possible. Make sure that another adult can see you. So plan to do activities in places where there are other adults. And plan to do things at the same time as people are doing other activities. You could also use classrooms and other rooms which have windows. Or you could keep doors open.

2. Do not be the only *adult

At least two *adults should be present when working with a group of children. The adults should not be from the same family. Sufficient adults should watch over events with young people, especially overnight.

Avoid being alone with one child. For example:

- Take at least two children to the bathroom together (rather than only one child).
- You may be driving children in a vehicle. If so, let any brothers and sisters get out of the vehicle last. Or bring your own child with you when driving children in a vehicle. Or let other adults see you (see paragraph 1 above). Or be ready to explain your actions (see paragraph 3 below).

3. Be ready to explain your actions

All *staff should mix with children in a way that is sensible, capable, safe, kind and responsible. You should be ready to explain your actions. All *staff should be ready to give comments to other staff. All staff should also be ready to accept comments from other *staff. This will make sure that people do their job with children seriously and in a good way.

In your work you may have to be alone with a child. If so, do what is set out below, if relevant.

- Be ready to explain your actions to other adults.
- Tell parents or those people who are in charge about any activities with children. Do this before the activity happens. For example, before you transport a child. Or before you make a child stay at school late. Or before an activity with young people. Or before you give lessons in private to a child.
- Private meetings with a child should be in a place where other people can see you. This could be in an office with a window in the door and only when another adult is near. That other adult must know about the meeting with the

child. Also that other adult must be willing to stay near until the meeting has ended.

- In an emergency, find another adult to help if possible. Or you can tell another adult who is available. An emergency might be if you have to transport a child alone. Or an emergency might be if you have to look after a child alone.

4. Having someone in charge

This also reduces risk. Anyone who is in charge of activities should make checks. That person should check classrooms, offices, work areas and other areas where children and adults are together. The person in charge should make the checks from time to time and as a surprise.

5. Act the same towards each child

When you are with more than one child, avoid being nicer to one child than to another child. Also avoid acting differently towards any of them. Do not leave out a child in the group in a way that is rude. And do not leave out a child in the group in a way that upsets the child.

At work or with the family or in other situations where there are children

Using computers

Use computers in a way that protects children from abuse. Do not use computers in a way that causes children harm.

For example, you can set limits on what there is available to see on the internet. This is called setting a filter. The filter can stop people from showing certain things on the internet to children. The filter can stop things that are not suitable.

Discipline

Use discipline to teach and to correct. Do not use discipline to punish. We set out here some actions to avoid. This is because those actions may be like physical abuse or emotional abuse.

- Do not call a child by a name which insults the child.
- Do not make fun of a child.
- Do not make a child feel worthless or ashamed.
- Do not punish one child in a group publicly.
- Do not exclude one child in a group.
- Do not shout at a child. Shouting may upset the child.
- Do not be cruel to a child.
- Do not reject a child.

Also:

- Do not hit a child, even with your hand.
- Do not attack a child.
- Do not push a child or hold a child against the child's will. But you can do so:
 - to protect the child from danger
 - to give medical care to the child

- to keep the child from harming itself or somebody else

If you are a parent, you may give some physical discipline to your children. But the discipline should not be too severe. You should not give physical discipline to a child if you are angry. Also you should not injure the child physically.

Touching children

Healthy, kind touch is valuable to children. But harmful touch is abuse of a child. So we advise you to act in the way set out here:

- Touch a child if it will help the child. Do not touch a child just because you want to.
- Touch a child where other people can see you, not secretly. For example, a hug can be very different in private or in public.
- How you touch a child should depend on the age of the child. Usually it should be the child who starts to touch an *adult. Usually the *adult should not be the one who starts to touch the child. Only touch a child if the child is content with that. If the child resists, do not touch the child.
- Touch should always show respect for the child. *Adults should avoid doing things for children that they can do for themselves. Examples include dressing a child or washing a child.

It is usually acceptable to do these things:

- Give praise.
- Hug one side of the child.
- Give a hug from your shoulder to the child's shoulder.

If other people are there, it is also usually acceptable to do these things to smaller children:

- Touch their hands, faces, shoulders and arms.
- Put your arms around their shoulders (if that is usual in that culture).
- Hug them or hold them

But some actions are not suitable. We set out here some actions to avoid.

- Do not touch a child's bottom, chest, sexual parts or the inside of the top part of its legs. But you can do so to babies or young children to keep them clean or healthy.
- Do not show affection when you are in a remote area or alone with a child.
- Do not sleep with a child unless it is your own.
- Do not lie on a bed with a child unless it is your own.
- Do not look with sexual desire at a child.
- Do not give any affection that the child does not want.
- Do not speak words which are sexual in nature.
- Do not show pictures or videos which are sexual in nature.
- Do not play games which are sexual in nature.
- Avoid doing anything which people may see as sexual in nature.

You should be watchful when another *adult has physical contact with children. If someone might get the wrong idea about that contact, you should mention that to the *adult. You can help each other in that way.

Talking with children

Adults should help and encourage a child. Adults can do this by praising a child or encouraging a child..

Here are some actions to avoid:

- Do not make a child feel ashamed.
- Do not make a child feel worthless.
- Do not call a child by a bad name.
- Do not use unkind language. It may frighten a child or threaten a child. Or unkind language may make a child feel worthless.
- Do not swear.
- Do not be rude about a child or its family or where it comes from.
- Do not make nasty comments about a child's body or its development.
- Do not tell a joke if it is sexual in nature.
- Do not tell a joke if it insults anyone.
- Do not make comments that are sexual in nature.
- Do not tell secrets if they are not suitable for a child.
- Do not talk about sexual experiences or desires if they are not suitable for a child.

Final comments:

Involving parents

Parents should know where their children are at all times. So you should tell parents about any activities which the school intends to do. The plan for the school term may have a list of these activities. They may include activities at night. Parents should consent to this in writing. Encourage parents to visit the activities as a surprise.

Watching how children behave with each other

Do not let a child abuse another child. And do not let a child act wrongly towards another child. Here are actions which children should not do:

- Do not be cruel to another child who is weaker.
- Do not bother another child.
- Do not make a child do nasty things to join a group.
- Do not play rough jokes on another child.
- Do not call another child by a rude name.
- Do not make another child feel worthless or ashamed.
- Do not be nasty to another child in public.
- Do not exclude another child in public.
- Do not touch another child in a way that is sexual and not suitable.
- Do not speak words which are sexual in nature and not suitable.
- Do not show pictures that are sexual in nature.
- Do not hit another child.
- Do not push another child or hold a child against its will.
- Do not attack another child.

Statement of agreement

All *staff should sign this statement every year if they work with children. Other *staff should sign this statement every four years. People in charge of the *Areas should make sure that all *staff sign this statement.

I have read the document on how *staff should keep children safe. I agree to do what it says.

I have attended *SIL's training course on Child Safety *Awareness and *Prevention. Or I have used the computer to complete the training course.

You can use a computer to do the training course. But it is much better for you to attend a course. There it is possible to look at your particular circumstances. If you cannot attend a course, please contact child-safety-asst_intl@sil.org. You should explain why you cannot attend a course. And you should ask to do the course on the computer. That course takes place from time to time.

I know that the following documents are available on Insite:

- The Child Safety *Policy
- The Child Safety *Policy Application Statement: Standards and Definitions and Child Safety *Procedures

I accept that I should know what is in those documents. I understand that from time to time the documents will change. I understand that people will tell me about any changes. I will then study the changes.

I declare that:

- I have not abused a child sexually.
- I have not abused a child physically.
- I have not abused a child emotionally, except perhaps once or twice.
- I have not neglected a child.

But if I have done any of these things, *SIL's Child Safety Office knows about it. And I have finished any necessary further action successfully or I am doing that action now.

Nobody has ever complained about me that I abused a child. And nobody has ever complained about me that I neglected a child. I mean at work, where I worship or where I do any work free of charge. And nobody has ever punished me or dismissed me after a complaint. Also, the government has never investigated me for these things. But if a person has complained, I have told the Child Safety Office directly or the *Entity Director. And I have done so, whatever the result of the complaint was. If I told the *Entity Director, that person must tell the Child Safety Office.

I understand that:

- I should report any abuse towards a child.
- I should report any other conduct towards a child if that conduct is not suitable. I should report to the director (or someone else who is the leader) of my work activity. That person will contact the Child Safety Office to use the Child Safety *Procedures.
- *SIL considers that complaints about the abuse of a child are something serious.
- *SIL does not allow abuse of any sort.

- *SIL will work together with the government to investigate any report of abuse.

I have read this form. I sign it of my own free will.

Signature:

Print your name:

Date:

Word list

'adult' means anyone who is 18 years old or over

'Areas' means the various places where *SIL works

'Awareness' means knowing about something

'Convention' means agreement

'Entity Director' means a director of any of SIL's divisions

'Fund' means organisation

'Insite' means *SIL's internal computer file

'neglect' means lack of proper care

'Policy' means plan

'Prevention' means stop

'Procedures' means ways of doing things

'SIL' means the Summer Institute of Linguistics, now known as SIL International

'staff' means an adult who

- Is a member of *SIL
- Is an employee of *SIL or
- Helps *SIL free of charge