

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Portuguese Association for Diversity and Inclusion (APPDI), is a non-profit association based in Lisbon, with the mission of fostering Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) in organizations and in the Portuguese society. APPDI was established in 2018, to pursue and expand the work of the Portuguese Diversity Charter, which was created in 2016 as an informal movement to promote the adoption of D&I policies and practices in the workplace. The Portuguese Diversity Charter currently accounts for over 500 signatory organisations.

APPDI has since become a national reference and a key stakeholder for Portuguese organizations which aim to work Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging within their contexts. APPDI has ever since developed a wide range of DEI-related training actions, tools and other consultancy services.

APPDI's work includes a strong emphasis on gender topics, particularly through the implementation of interventions to prevent a gender-based segregation in vocational and professional choices. Since 2017, APPDI is responsible for the implementation of the *Engineers For a Day* Program (a public policy funded by the Portuguese government, seeking to build awareness on STEM and TIC career options for female students under 18 years-old). Moreover, APPDI is currently seeking new funding opportunities to implement a program to attract more boys to pursue care related occupations (*Carers for a Day*).

As part of these Programs, APPDI carries out awareness raising and training initiatives in schools, mostly targeting students aged 12 to 18 years old, aiming to challenge gender stereotypes among students that perpetuate a gender-based occupational segregation. These activities require a direct contact with children, both as participants, as end users and as audience.

The implementation of the Portuguese Diversity Charter might occasionally include other activities with children, namely training/awareness-raising sessions held in signatory schools or other initiatives promoted by the Charter's Working Group on Education. These activities always include the presence of an educator or a legal guardian. Apart from the abovementioned activities, no other contacts are foreseen with children in APPDI's daily activities.

2. APPDI'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECT CHILDREN

Acknowledging the centrality of children's safety considerations, and considering that a high number of activities promoted by APPDI involve a direct and frequent contact with children, even if almost always mediated by an educator, APPDI deems important to adopt the present Child Protection Policy.

The aim of this policy is to **define the guidelines and the procedures that APPDI must put in place to keep children safe and to respond to child protection concerns within the scope of its activities**. This CPP enters into force on the day of its signature and is binding to all employees, trainees, volunteers, partnering organisations and service providers, as well as any person working in APPDI's name.

this document adopts the definition set out in the United Nation Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) which defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Within its intervention with children, APPDI is strongly committed to:

- Guarantee the child the right to be protected against all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, regardless of his/her age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity and other individual characteristics;
- Protecting children's rights and their best interests, with no exception;
- Placing the child as the first priority when dealing with all identified or suspected cases of child abuse;
- Empowering and educating children on their rights, personal safety and steps they can take, if there is a problem;
- Guarantee the child, with capacity of forming his/her own view, the right to freely express his/ her opinion (including safe spaces to do so) and actively listening to and take into account their concerns.
- Never allow discrimination and discriminatory behavior towards children;
- Protecting children's identity and image, not photographing or recording children without the consent of their parents/guardians and without giving information about the purpose of the documented/recorded material.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

APPDI acknowledges and commits to **respecting national and international legal frameworks protecting the rights of children.**

At the international level, this Child Protection Policy is guided by the international Convention on the Rights of the Child and by the General Comment No.13 (2011) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence.

The present document is also based on the Portuguese legislation, namely the *Lei de Proteção à Infância* of 27/05/1911 (Child Protection Law), the *Lei de Proteção de Crianças e Jovens em Risco* (Protection for Children and Young People in Danger), and the 1976 Portuguese Constitution, articles 69 and 70.

This Child Protection Policy was also built upon the *Keeping Children Safe* Child Safeguarding Standards.

4. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

It's **the responsibility of APPDI to make all staff, trainees, volunteers, associated members and partner organisations aware about all aspects and procedures of the present Child Protection Policy.**

APPDI commits to adopt the following procedures to ensure child protection:

- To appoint the person in charge of monitoring the implementation of APPDI's Child Protection Policy, which is assigned with the following responsibilities:
 - To raise awareness and promote the implementation of the Child Protection Policy in the organisation;
 - To monitor the implementation of the Child Protection Policy;
 - To maintain the necessary knowledge of best practices and legal requirements on child protection and to communicate it to APPDI's staff, trainers, volunteers and partner organisations;
 - To act as person in charge for reports.

4. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- APPDI **should guarantee that high professional standards and procedures are applied during the recruitment, selection and appointment of staff, trainees, volunteers and partner organisations** working directly or indirectly with children, including criminal background checks and other professional references checks.
- APPDI should ensure that, once being hired, new staff, trainees and volunteers will be given access to this Child Protection Policy and will sign a clause confirming the acknowledgement of and the compliance with APPDI's CPP.
- To ensure that the onboarding of new staff, trainees and volunteers includes a briefing on child protection issues;
- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures;
- To have updated information on data protection, confidentiality, information sharing and other matters of legal nature that may cause impact on child protection;
- Ensure that all employees, trainees and volunteers working with APPDI have adequate training opportunities, as well as opportunities to develop competences in the context of the rights of the child.
- To **ensure that APPDI's partnerships with other organisations or individuals do not collide with the principles and procedures of this Child Protection Policy.**
- To promote a safe, free, open and enabling environment where children are encouraged to discuss their concerns and rights and to express their point of view;
- To ensure the inclusion and non-discrimination of all children, adapting activities to account for different gender, race, ethnic and religious identities and to children with disabilities;
- APPDI's staff and partner organisations should make sure that the space they are using for the activity corresponds to their purpose;
- APPDI's staff and partner organisations should make sure that the training and awareness-raising initiatives held under its intervention **include information specifically addressed to children on their rights;**
- All employees, trainees and volunteers working with APPDI should not use or adopt not inappropriate, disrespectful or harmful language or behaviour when working with children.
- Be aware of potential for peer abuse (e.g. bullying of children) and report situations of child harm and abuse;
- To **ensure that no personal data of children is disclosed without consent**, while making mandatory that a declaration of consent and confidentiality is signed whenever collecting personal data of children is deemed necessary;

4. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

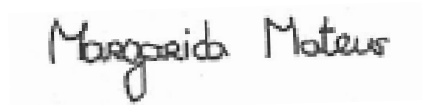
- To ensure that information or images of children are not used without the written consent of the respective parents, legal representative or legal guardian and of the child, and, when used, not displaying children's images that may hurt their dignity;
- To ensure that third parties (visitors, audiovisual workers, journalists, partners, funders, other stakeholders) do not publish photographs or videos of children in any medium of communication or institutional material without prior permission from APPDI;
- To observe guidelines and the code of conduct applied by partner schools or other partner organisations for the protection of children.
- To report all concerns, suspicious or situations relating to possible child abuse and neglect to the person in charge of partner schools and other organisations.

5. CPP IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

This policy and procedures will be regularly reviewed.

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children;
- in case of significant changes in the APPDI's intervention and activities conducted with children;
- regularly, in all other circumstances, at least every three years.

The person in charge of monitoring the implementation of APPDI's Child Protection Policy:



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