



# Child Protection Policy

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POLICY GUIDELINES, PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES ON CHILD  
PROTECTION AT GRANTXPERT CONSULTING LTD

2017

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## Policy Statement

GrantXpert Consulting Ltd affirms its belief in the rights of all children to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, as set out in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in the Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention, 2007). GrantXpert Consulting has been actively involved in research projects related to children since 2009 and thus it has firm guidelines on how children should be protected in this type of work and in other related activities conducted by the company (training seminars, workshops, outreach and dissemination activities, etc.).

This document is intended for all GrantXpert's staff, contractors and those working on a voluntary or unpaid basis on behalf of the company. The Child Protection Policy of GrantXpert includes the general obligations of its employees and subcontractors. It is distributed to all employees and subcontractors involved in projects related to children to inform them about their obligations. Also, GrantXpert has the responsibility to ensure that staff members, subcontractors, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and any concerns might evoke about children's safety within the communities in which GrantXpert operates, are reported to the appropriate authorities.

The knowledge and acceptance of Child Protection Policy is an essential prerequisite for recruiting workers and has a decisive impact on the professional activity and career development of all GrantXpert employees while their commitment to behave ethically is an important factor in providing high quality services.

## General Principles

The United Nations's (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (The Lanzarote Convention, Article 3(a), 2007). The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital in prison or in a Young Offender's Institution does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection.

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## GrantXpert Child Protection Plan

Everybody operating on behalf of the company must be alert to the possibility of child abuse and of their obligation to convey any concerns to the relative National Child Protection Officers, such as Cyprus Police (the information is in accordance to the EU standards provided in the Manual “Child Safeguarding Standards” (Keeping Children Safe, 2014).

### A code of conduct

- The Director of GrantXpert Consulting is appointed as a Child Protection Officer to facilitate the implementation of this policy. The officer will ensure that the code of conduct will provide all staff members and/or internees or subcontractors involved in projects related to children with the Code of Conduct.
- Staff members, subcontractors and internees will sign a copy of the Code of Conduct prior to performing any work duties and annually thereafter.

### Education and Training

- All GrantXpert’s employees/subcontractors/internees working with children will be provided with guidance and/or training that includes: good practice and child protection procedures, information on Communicating with Children, Sexual abuse, Prevention, Early Identification, Responding, Documenting, and Reporting.
- The training programmes are inspired by existing resources and are developed by building on the programmes already developed through relevant projects.
- The first introduction to these guidelines will be provided during induction week for any new employee.

### Safe Recruitment

- Make sure during the interview that the selection-criteria for a new hire include relevant experience needed if the post involves direct work with children.
- Take up to three references including some from previous employees or others who have knowledge of the candidate’s experience and suitability to work with children.
- All new recruitments will undergo a review of the Child Protection Guidelines

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- GrantXpert will ensure that all new recruitments take the prevention of child abuse very seriously. Signing the relevant Code of Conduct will ensure the commitment of all staff members to adhere to all child safeguarding standards.
- The welfare of the child is considered principal by all employees.

## Safe Programme Design

- All projects and programmes are designed to minimise the risk of harm to the children they come into contact with or impact upon directly or indirectly by taking sufficient account of child safety, whatever the focus of the work.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in research and educational programmes in a safe environment
- Reasonable steps are taken to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Adopt the safest possible practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children
- Running safe events and activities for children. Planning activities, will take into consideration the following:
  - Recognising that the family or community do not always welcome the participation of children in such activities.
  - The organisation holds events or activities at times when children are invited.
  - Ensuring that particular care is taken to ensure preventative measures are put in place to safeguard children if activities or events are to take place in unfamiliar places and outside family care.

## Communication

- Working in partnership with teachers, parents and children is essential for the protection of children
- Must ensure that children and families with whom the company works are aware of the Child Safeguarding Policy and applicable local procedures, so that they know what

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behaviours they can expect from staff, associates and visitors and whom to report any concerns.

## **Risk Assessment/Risk Mitigation**

- The company does everything possible to minimise risk and address concerns and incidents appropriately when they arise.
- Quality assurance system is adapted in all programmes under implementation and projects on a 6 month basis followed by reporting processes.
- Partner organisations involved in the implementation of related projects will be required and supported to develop minimum child safeguarding measures appropriate to their organisation.
- The company includes confidential reporting mechanisms for child protection concerns.
- Ensuring good practice when using media (both traditional and new/social). Planning activities, will take into consideration the following:
  - Consent forms will be required by their parents/carers to take their image and use their information.
  - Do not use inappropriate information, stories and visual images (photographs, video or social media) of children (such as images of children must not show them in states of undress or in inappropriate poses)
  - Do not include information that can easily trace children's home or community or contact details.
  - Geotagging of images should be disabled when taking photographs.
  - Ensure the photographer/journalist/translator employed is properly vetted and reference checked.

## **Procedure for reporting alleged or suspected child abuse**

- Director (Child Protection Officer) must be notified
- Complaints must be assessed to make sure that child abuse may have occurred or is suspected
- Where valid grounds for concern are established that child abuse indeed occurred or is suspected immediately:

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- The Director together with the person who receives the information/complain makes a written and official report (either immediately on the same day or in the next 2-3 days, depending on the seriousness of the case), at the Offices of the Crime Combating Department (CY police) - for further handling the case. The report cannot be sent by fax for personal data protection purposes.
- The Director informs the family. In any case, the Director should avoid giving more information that is needed to parents, as it may influence possible evidence.

## Definitions of Child Protection

Definitions were found in a) the manual of Keeping Children Safe (2014) entitled “Child safeguarding standards and how to implement them”, b) in the publication of Council of Europe Convention (2012) entitled “Protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse” and in c) the Terminology Guidelines (2016) prepared by Terminology and Semantics interagency Working Group of Sexual Exploitation of Children.

### **Direct contact with children**

Direct contact with children is described by the physical presence of a child or children in the context of the organisation’s work (such as research, dissemination activities, care, supervision, guidance or control of children or routine interaction with children). This is considered an integral aspect to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities.

### **Indirect contact with children**

It describes the contact that is usually something less than face-to-face. Provided access to information on children in the context of the organisation’s work (such as children’s names, locations, photographs and case studies).

**Physical abuse:** “Physical child abuse is physical injury inflicted upon the child with cruel and/or malicious intent. Physical abuse can be the result of hitting, punching, poisoning, drowning, beating, shaking, kicking, biting, burning, or otherwise harming a child physically. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.”

**Sexual abuse:** “forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities that he or she does not fully understand and has little choice in consenting to. This may include, but is not limited to,

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rape, oral sex, penetration, or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching. It may also include involving children in looking at, or producing sexual images, watching sexual activities and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.” “A thorough definition of offences concerning sexual abuse, also includes in that definition the fact of causing a child to witness sexual activities or sexual abuse, engaging in sexual activities with a child, and coercing, forcing, or threatening a child into sexual activities with a third party (EU Directive 2011/93 sets forth, in its Article 3)”.

**Sexual assault:** is defined as “the action or an act of forcing an unconsenting person to engage in sexual activity; a crime involving forced sexual contact” or “sexual contact that usually involves force upon a person without consent”.<sup>80</sup>

**Child sexual molestation:** “molestation refers to the act of touching or attacking someone, especially a child, in a sexual way. The word “molest” derives from the Latin words molestare (“to annoy”) and molestus (“troublesome”). The term “molestation” is widely used in family law contexts, where it usually relates to spousal/parental relations (e.g. “non-molestation clauses” in the context of matrimonial proceedings/spousal separation/domestic violence in common law countries)”

**Sexual Harassment:** “sexual harassment” refers not only to sexual conduct with the explicit intention to violate the dignity of another person (i.e. purpose) but also to conduct of a sexual nature that a person experiences as offensive or intimidating (i.e. effect). It therefore relates clearly to what is also sometimes called sexual bullying. “Unwanted sexual comments” can be an example of this, since the person making the comments may not necessarily intend for them to violate the dignity of the person, although that is the effect they may cause.”

**Online child sexual abuse:** “refers to both to the sexual abuse of children that is facilitated by ICTs (e.g. online grooming) and to sexual abuse of children that is committed elsewhere and then repeated by sharing it online through, for instance, images and videos. The preferred term in the case of the former is “online-facilitated child sexual abuse”.

**Child sexual exploitation:** “a form of sexual abuse that involves children being engaged in any sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, food, accommodation, affection, status, or anything else that they or their family needs. It usually involves a child being manipulated or coerced,

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which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. Child sexual exploitation manifests in different ways. It can involve an older perpetrator exercising financial, emotional or physical control over a young person. It can involve peers manipulating or forcing victims into sexual activity, sometimes within gangs and in gang-affected neighborhoods. It may also involve opportunistic or organised networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.’

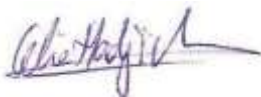
**Offences concerning child prostitution:** “recruiting a child into prostitution or causing a child to participate in prostitution. Coercing a child into prostitution or profiting from or otherwise exploiting a child for such purposes. Having recourse to child prostitution.”

**Emotional abuse:** “persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts on a child’s emotional development. Emotionally abusive acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, bullying (including cyber bullying), and threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.”

**Commercial exploitation:** “exploiting a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others and to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour.”

### Signature:

*The Founder and Managing Director of GrantXpert Consulting Ltd, Dr. Vassilia Hadjichristodoulou has committed to providing leadership on child safeguarding – ensuring that it is implemented fully, that all concerns or incidents are addressed appropriately and that staff and associates receive the support required to meet commitments and obligations.*



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Date: \_\_\_\_\_01/12/2017\_\_\_\_\_