



**KOLKATA SANVED SAFEGUARDING**  
**POLICY**

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# **KOLKATA SANVED SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy sets out the statutory requirements for Kolkata Sanved (KS) to discharge its appropriate accountability for Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk of harm or abuse. The safeguarding policy must be read in conjunction with KS's Human Resource (HR) policy and others.

### ***Its objectives are:***

- To identify risks to children and vulnerable adults coming in contact with the organization
- To identify potential risks and risk mitigation strategies within the context of organizational work.
- Outline principles, attitudes, expectations and ways of working that recognize safeguarding as everybody's business and that the safety and well-being of those in vulnerable circumstances is at the forefront of our business
- To create a safeguarding structure that ensures accountability
- To align safeguarding with the vision and mission of the organization
- To uphold the rights of children and vulnerable adults
- To enforce disciplinary and other necessary measures on policy violation or in case of safeguarding matters.

## **2. ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

Kolkata Sanved believes that individuals should live with dignity & self respect. This basic sense of empowerment & integrity can be achieved through dance movement therapy (DMT). Kolkata Sanved has pioneered the use of DMT for development in India, to heal & empower survivors of trafficking, exploitation violence and other forms of marginalization. KS believes that cycles of violence begin & end with the body, leading to feelings of guilt, shame & self loathing and creating negative stigmas associated with the body. Through DMT, survivors develop a new relationship with their bodies, overcome their trauma and are able to foster a positive outlook towards the future.

### ***2.1 Vision***

To harness the power of dance and dance movement therapy to heal, empower & transform individuals into active citizens and change makers

### ***2.2 Mission***

To build the ecosystem for DMT-for-Change across Asia and create leaders & change-makers in the field, especially from underprivileged communities

### **3. WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?**

Safeguarding is the responsibility that all organizations have to protect the health, wellbeing and human rights of children and vulnerable adults they come into contact with in their daily work. It is the duty that organizations have to make sure their programmes do not put those who are vulnerable at risk. It also ensures that they are able to support vulnerable populations mitigate risks in their life within the scope of their work. This includes both preventative actions to minimize the chances of harm occurring, and responsive actions to ensure incidents that arise are appropriately handled. Protection is a part of safeguarding and refers to activities undertaken to protect specific groups who are being abused or are at risk of being abused

#### ***3.1 Principles of Safeguarding***

Safeguarding has two primary guiding principles. These are:

- To make sure all action taken is in the best interest of the child or person receiving protection.
- To make sure action taken causes no harm to the child or person being protected.

Besides this, the following key principles underlie all safe guarding work

- Empowerment: Empowerment implies that people are being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent
- Prevention: This is based on the belief that it is better to take action before harm occurs
- Proportionality: This seeks to mete out the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- Protection: Protection entails support and representation for those in greatest need
- Partnership: The principle of partnership implies local solutions through services working with their communities – communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- Accountability: The principal of accountability states that accountability and transparency must be maintained in safeguarding practice.

#### ***3.2 Why do KS need a Safeguarding Policy?***

Kolkata Sanved (KS) is the 1st organization not only to explore the artistic skills of the marginalized communities but also give recognition to the fact that marginalized communities too have the right to develop artistic skills

The organization started using Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) as a therapeutic tool in 2004 for those who are most vulnerable and underprivileged i.e. survivors of trafficking. This enabled young women survivors of trafficking to emerge as self sufficient leaders and DMT trainers. 95% of the employees in KS are survivors.

Harnessing the strengths of its team, KS reached out to other vulnerable populations. Kolkata Sanved's core programme 'Empowering Lives through Dance' works with different marginalized communities in collaboration with the Government and NGOs.

Kolkata Sanved has worked extensively with the child protection system. It works with vulnerable children who have faced marginalization in the form of poverty, abuse, violence stigma and discrimination. It also works with children in conflict with the law. Another focus of KS's work is adults facing discrimination including those with mental illness.

As a result KS, through its work, regularly comes into contact with vulnerable populations who are facing a variety of risks. Therefore it is essential for them to create systems that promote and ensure safeguarding. As an organization with a deep commitment towards human rights safeguarding becomes an integral part of KS's program.

### ***3.3 Who are we safeguarding?***

In the purview of KS's work we are protecting the following category of people

- Populations benefiting from an organization
- Coming in contact with organizational activities
- Working with the organization

KS's safeguarding policy applies to both children and other vulnerable adults. A child is defined as anybody under the age of 18. In this category KS protects:

- Anyone benefiting from the services of the organization. This includes all children being supported through the services of the organization and / or coming in contact with the organization
- Any child associated with the organization who is known to be at risk
- Any child associated with the organization who has special needs

The term adult means anyone who is over the age of 18. A vulnerable adult is someone who due to physical, social, economic, cultural, emotional and psychological factors is unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerable adults protected by the policy are:

- All vulnerable adults being supported through the services of the organization and / or coming in contact with the organization
- Any vulnerable adult associated with the organization that is known to be at risk.

### ***3.4 The difference between safeguarding and child protection***

Organizations have shifted from implementing child protection policies to adopting the concept of safeguarding. This is because safeguarding is broader in scope and includes a multiplicity of vulnerabilities that may occur within the context of work in Kolkata Sanved. Through an approach of safeguarding KS commits to ensure and promote a safe environment within the workplace.

### ***3.5 The safeguarding policy and the UNCRC***

The safeguarding policy of KS is based on the principles contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child. These are:

- Non Discrimination
- Adherence to the best interests of the child.
- The right to life, survival and development
- The right to participate.

### ***3.6 Guiding principles***

Along with the UNCRC KS's policy framework draws its guiding principles from:

- United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disability.
- Constitution of India
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2016
- Persons with Disability Act, 1995
- Right to Education Act, 2009
- Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013
- And all other relevant Acts in India.

### ***3.7 Our Role***

- Preventing or reducing risks for children and vulnerable adults within ambit of work of the organization
- Reporting risks that arise with those associated with us in other contexts.
- Collaboration and Networking with other agencies in addressing risks or responding to any safeguarding concern.
- Referral of cases that is beyond the purview of our work.
- Advocacy in the larger system to uphold the rights of children and vulnerable adults.

### ***3.8 Scope of the Policy***

- The policy applies to all employees, students, volunteers, interns, participants of DMT sessions, consultants, partner organizations, Academy students and all those

coming into contact with KS through programmes, operations and activities. It also applies to funders and donors and media professionals working with KS

- There must be a distinction made between legal obligations and moral obligations while implementing the policy. The scope of the policy is legal in nature. It extends to all those associated within the ambit of KS's work. Moral obligations cannot be enforced through the policy but will be held in spirit and action as an overarching commitment of the organization.

#### **4.1 VULNERABILITIES IN CHILDHOOD**

Every child is vulnerable by virtue of his/her age. However vulnerability also refers to a child's ability for self-protection. Often certain risk factors hamper a child's ability to develop skills essential for self-protection.

These risk factors could arise due to individual factors. These are:

- Physical Disabilities
- Mental Disabilities
- Disturbed Behavior
- Illness
- Problems with Adjustment

These risk factors can arise out of the environment as well. These are:

- Economic Disadvantage
- Discrimination
- Stigma
- Isolation

A vulnerable child is defined as a child who, because of circumstances of birth or immediate environment, is prone to abuse or deprivation of basic needs, care and protection, and is thus disadvantaged relative to his or her peers (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2008). These children are thus exposed to many of the risk factors across their lifespan. In the Indian legal context vulnerable children are divided into two categories; children in the need of care and protection and children in conflict with the law. While the latter category is placed in observation homes the former are usually found in shelter homes. Among other things children coming under this category include children who have faced abuse and violence, children living in poverty, children addicted to substances, children whose parents cannot take care of them and orphaned children. Such children are thus exposed to multiple risk factors both in the individual and community contexts. They have also faced many stressful life experiences.

- Children who have lost one or both parents
- Children living with terminally or chronically ill parent
- Children on the street (e.g. child hawkers)

- Children living with aged or frail grandparent
- Neglected and abandoned children
- Children in child-headed homes
- Children infected with HIV
- Child domestic servants
- Child beggars/destitute children
- Child sex workers
- Children with special challenges or disability, or whose parents have disability
- Trafficked children of migrant workers e.g., fishermen or women, nomads
- Children subjected to gender based discrimination.

Such children are often at greater risk for abuse and exploitation.

#### **4.2 WHO IS A VULNERABLE ADULT?**

A vulnerable adult is someone who in spite of being above the age of 18 years old does not have the skills for self protection. Certain risk factors also place adults at risk of becoming vulnerable.

These are:

- Physical Disabilities
- Mental Disabilities
- Disturbed Behavior
- Illness
- Problems with Adjustment

Like children adults are also subject to risk factors in the environment. These are:

- Economic Disadvantage
- Discrimination
- Stigma
- Isolation

Particular categories of vulnerable adults include:

- Persons living with mental illness
- Persons living with illness
- Persons living with disability
- Those who are marginalized due to gender
- Those who are marginalized due to sexual identity
- Those who are marginalized due to social identity (Religious, cultural or caste based)
- Those who face economic disadvantage
- The Elderly



Vulnerabilities put adults at risk of abuse harm and violence as well. This violence can be in the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, discriminatory abuse, financial abuse and exploitation.

### **4.3 What is Abuse and Maltreatment?**

Child Abuse and Maltreatment: Child maltreatment, sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, development or dignity. Within this broad definition, five subtypes can be distinguished – physical abuse; sexual abuse; neglect and negligent treatment; emotional abuse; and exploitation. Child abuse may be a deliberate act or it may be failing to act to prevent children from being harmed. Child abuse includes anything that individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do, intentionally or unintentionally, that can harm children or damage their safe and healthy development into adulthood.

Abuse and Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults: Similarly the abuse or maltreatment of vulnerable adults refers to actual or potential harm inflicted on a vulnerable adult. This too has many forms mainly physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, financial abuse, exploitation and discriminatory abuse.

### **4.4 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse can include punching, hitting, slapping, kicking, strangling, or physically restraining a partner against their will. It can also include driving recklessly or invading someone’s physical space, and in any other way making someone feels physically unsafe.

Physical abuse in respect to a child is generally defined as “any non-accidental physical injury to the child” and can include striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child, or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child.

The signs and effects of physical abuse are described below.

<b>Examples</b>	<b>Signs</b>	<b>Impact</b>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beating with a stick, ruler, belt Or any other object</li> <li>• Slapping</li> <li>• Pushing</li> <li>• Suffocating</li> <li>• Throwing</li> <li>• Pinching</li> <li>• Biting</li> <li>• Aiding and abetting attempted suicide and/or death</li> <li>• Rough handling</li> <li>• Exposure to heat or cold</li> <li>• Force feeding</li> <li>• Improper administration of medication</li> <li>• Denial of treatment</li> <li>• Use of restraint</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL SIGNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scars on the body</li> <li>• Burn marks on hands or body</li> <li>• Regular bruises on face or any other part of the body</li> <li>• Discomfort in walking or sitting</li> <li>• Aggression</li> <li>• Unable to explain causes of injuries</li> <li>• Not wanting to be touched</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC SIGNS IN CHILDREN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absenteeism from school</li> <li>• Bullying or beating other children</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Aggression or depression</li> <li>• Aloofness, withdrawn</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC IMPACT ON CHILDREN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of adults (including parents, older siblings, neighbors, teachers, police)</li> <li>• Running away from home</li> <li>• Not wanting to return home or school, depending on where the abuser might be in case of children.</li> </ul>
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#### **4.5 Emotional/Psychological Abuse**

Psychological or emotional abuse is harmful behavior that can cause mental distress. It can involve both verbal and non-verbal abuse which can scare, humiliate and isolate a person.

In reference to children emotional abuse is defined as any act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, or any other treatment that many diminish a child's sense of dignity and self worth.

The signs and effects of emotional abuse are described below:

<b>Examples</b>	<b>Signs</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is discrimination in the family e.g. boys get</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL SIGNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over- or under-stress</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low self</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more food than girls</li> <li>• When children do not have time for play or leisure activities</li> <li>• When children are punished by being kept outside the front door, locked in a dark room or threatened</li> <li>• When a child is constantly teased about his/her height, weight</li> <li>• Threats</li> <li>• Humiliation or ridicule</li> <li>• Provoking fear of violence</li> <li>• Shouting, yelling and swearing</li> <li>• Blaming</li> <li>• Controlling</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Coercion</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Denying support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being withdrawn</li> <li>• Too eager to do everything they are asked</li> <li>• Showing compulsive behavior</li> <li>• Not being able to do things they used to</li> <li>• Not being able to concentrate or focus</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">SPECIFIC SIGNS IN CHILDREN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are withdrawn or unfriendly</li> <li>• Children bully other children or siblings</li> <li>• Attention seeking behavior</li> <li>• Eating disorders</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">esteem and low self worth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug and alcohol abuse</li> <li>• Mental health problems</li> <li>• Poor long term health</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">SPECIFIC IMPACT IN CHILDREN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying or abusive behavior towards younger children</li> </ul>
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#### **4.6 Neglect**

Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support needed by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a decision not to act when they know the adult in their care needs help. It may impair the health or well-being of an adult.

In reference to children neglect is frequently defined as the failure of a parent or other person with responsibility for the child to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical

care, or supervision to the degree that the child’s health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm.

The signs and effects of neglect are described below:

<b>Examples</b>	<b>Signs</b>	<b>Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor hygiene</li> <li>• They do not get sufficient food</li> <li>• They are ill and their parents or caregivers do not seek medical assistance for them</li> <li>• They are not given immunizations against childhood infections and diseases</li> <li>• Their basic needs are not met</li> <li>• When parents do not care about where their children are, whether or not they have eaten, or done their homework</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL SIGNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having pain or discomfort</li> <li>• Being very hungry, thirsty or untidy</li> <li>• Failing health</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC SIGNS IN CHILDREN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have lice, scabies, body odor</li> <li>• Constant hunger, tiredness</li> <li>• Begging or stealing for food and clothes</li> <li>• Regular/chronic ill health</li> <li>• Absenteeism from school and children’s leisure activities</li> <li>• Unable to complete homework or other school assignments</li> <li>• Their physical development is not appropriate for their age</li> <li>• Delayed speech development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor outcomes for emotional and social development</li> <li>• Poor long term health</li> <li>• Poor educational or occupational achievement</li> </ul>

#### **4.7 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse can involve rape or other forced sexual acts, or withholding or using sex as a weapon. An abuser might also use sex as a means to judge their partner and assign a value. Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity or sexual behavior that happens without consent or understanding.

Child sexual abuse or child molestation is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation. Forms of child sexual abuse include engaging in sexual activities with a child (whether by asking or pressuring, or by other

means), indecent exposure (of the genitals, female nipples, etc.), child grooming, or using a child to produce child pornography.

The signs and effects of child sexual abuse are described below:

<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>SIGNS</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An adult exposing his or her genitals to a child or persuading a child to do the same</li> <li>• An adult touching a child's genitals or making the child touch the adult's genitalia</li> <li>• An adult involving a child in pornography which includes showing a child pornographic material</li> <li>• An adult having oral, vaginal or anal intercourse with a child</li> <li>• Any verbal or other sexual suggestion made to a child by an adult</li> <li>• Forcing a child to witness sex between adults</li> <li>• An adult forcing two or more children to engage in sexual activity among themselves</li> <li>• An adult inserting foreign objects into a</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL SIGNS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempting to inflict self-injury</li> <li>• Discomfort in sitting in certain positions</li> <li>• Blood stained underwear</li> <li>• Precocious sexual behavior</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC SIGNS IN CHILDREN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding contact with certain adults</li> <li>• Running away from home</li> <li>• Not concentrating in school or failing examinations</li> <li>• Focusing on his or her genitals</li> <li>• Sexual exploration and abuse of other children</li> <li>• Regular rubbing of body parts against objects</li> <li>• Masturbation</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENERAL IMPACT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwanted pregnancy</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>• Other medical problems</li> <li>• HIV and AIDS</li> <li>• Drug use</li> <li>• Alcoholism</li> <li>• Unable to have a normal sexual relationship with members of the opposite sex due to fear of sexual contact</li> <li>• Suicide attempts</li> <li>• Psychological trauma</li> <li>• Physical trauma during sexual abuse resulting in inability of a girl to have children when she is an adult</li> <li>• Abortions</li> <li>• Genital itching, soreness</li> <li>• Using bad language</li> <li>• Not wanting to be touched</li> <li>• Behaving in a sexually inappropriate way</li> <li>• Changes in appearance</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> </ul> <p><b>SPECIFIC IMPACTS IN CHILDREN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children are known to have killed their abusers</li> <li>• Lack of trust in adults</li> </ul>

<p>child's body for the adult's sexual gratification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual abuse also includes children being lured into being trafficked either on the pretext of marriage, offer of jobs or prostitution</li> <li>• Indecent exposure</li> <li>• Stalking</li> <li>• Grooming</li> <li>• Forced to look at or be involved in producing sexually abusive material</li> <li>• Forced to watch sexual activities</li> <li>• Sexual Harassment</li> <li>• Unwanted Overtures</li> <li>• Using sexually provocative language or gestures</li> <li>• Rape</li> <li>• Groping</li> <li>• Catcalling</li> <li>• Coercing sex in return of benefits</li> </ul>		
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***4.8 Exploitation***

Exploitation of children can be in two forms; commercial or sexual exploitation.

Commercial exploitation can be defined 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 labor. Exploitation can also take place within the workplace. For example a child within DMT sessions might be used to run errands, which the employee is expected to do. Also if there is a child intern in the office her/his labor might be exploited by those in power.

Children are considered to be exploited whenever a profit is made from their vulnerability and lack of power, whenever children are abused to somebody else's benefit.

Sexual Exploitation is 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, which may involve befriending children, gaining their trust, and subjecting them to drugs and alcohol. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power where the victim's options are limited. It is a form of abuse that can be misunderstood by children and adults as consensual.

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 organized networks of perpetrators who profit financially from trafficking young victims between different locations to engage in sexual activity with multiple men.

Within commercial exploitation children might be subjected to sexual, physical and emotional violence.

The effects of the commercial exploitation of children are manifold. This includes:

- Threat of Violence, Abuse and Neglect
- Trauma
- Risk of Illness
- Risk of contracting STD
- Risk of mental illness
- Being deprived of education
- Run in with the law
- Disruptive behavior
- Developing harmful addictions
- Exposed to hazardous work conditions

Exploitation of adults can be defined as the harmful use of individuals for profit. Exploitation is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control

over another person. It is taking advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain.

Exploitation comes in many forms, including:

- Slavery
- Being controlled by a person or a group
- Forced or compulsory labor
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Sexual violence and abuse
- Human trafficking
- Using power and control to extract labor or getting you to do another person's work

#### ***4.9 Discriminatory abuse***

Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. It can be a feature of any form of abuse of an adult, but can also be motivated because of age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, class, culture, language, race or ethnic origin. Both children and adults can be subjected to this form of abuse.

#### ***4.10 Financial Abuse or Exploitation***

Financial abuse or exploitation refers to the use of financial resources to control and exploit another.

Signs of financial abuse are:

- Having unusual difficulty with finances
- Not having enough money
- Being too protective of money and things they own
- Not paying bills
- Not having normal home comforts

#### ***4.11 Corporal Punishment***

Corporal punishment is defined as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. In addition, there are other non-physical forms of punishment that are also cruel and degrading and also fall within the realm of corporal punishment. This includes punishment that belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

### **5. PREVENTION:**

#### **5.1. RISK MAPPING & RISK MITIGATION**



An important part of safeguarding work is preventive in nature. This means one must anticipate possible risks before it occurs and take adequate measures to protect against such risks. This chapter presents the risks in the purview of KS's work and how KS has devised ways to mitigate these risks.

### ***5.1.1: Risks in the Realm of Programs and Operations***

- KS is committed to continually assess risks that might arise in the context of its work and continue to plan risk mitigation strategies, or strategies that reduce such risks based on the impact it could potentially have on the children or vulnerable adult and the likelihood of such identified risks.
- If a program is of high risk and adequate risk mitigation strategies can't be found, KS will take necessary steps not to implement the activities or programs.

## **5.2. SAFE RECRUITMENT**

KS is committed to ensuring risk and risk mitigation strategies are developed and followed in the process of recruitment to make sure employees are not found engaging in illegal or inappropriate behavior.

The ways to manage this risk is:

- KS recruits a large number of its employee's from the TOT and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Academy, as a result KS ensures potential employees go through a thorough vetting process.
- Those who cannot be recruited in this manner will have to go through a thorough background check. This will include a police check as well as a reference from the most recent employer. The police check will be mandatory for those who come in direct contact with vulnerable populations.
- Adequate induction training and refresher training on safeguarding for all staff will be ensured.
- Orientation and compliance to the safeguarding policy will be enabled.
- Interviews will include direct questions related to safeguarding and personal behavior and attitude towards children and vulnerable adult
- All staff and associates will sign on a self disclosure form declaring that they have no criminal records in the past and or do not have had any past records related to any safeguarding concerns. Refer Annex 1 for the self disclosure form

## **5.3 WORK WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Risk Mitigation practices in our collaborations is:

- Practicing due diligence while selecting partners
- Making sure partner organizations have a safeguarding policy or some commitments towards safeguarding
- Making sure partners are committed to and have understanding on safeguarding of children and also sign and comply with the safeguarding policy of KS

- Making an agreement on how both organizations should collaborate for safeguarding purposes. That is predefining the standard operating protocol to report violations and defining the responsibility of each partner
- Helping organizations who don't have safeguarding policies formulate one
- Advocating and negotiating with authorities to ensure the safety of practitioners and participants
- Ensuring a section on complying with the safeguarding policy is clearly mentioned and included in all MOU's and contract letters for partners.

## **6. CODE OF CONDUCT**

KS will ensure all staff members maintain a code of conduct in the carrying out their daily duties and responsibilities. They must also ensure that their behavior upholds the rights of those they work with and ensures respect and dignity for all.

### ***6.1 General Principles***

- Respect each individual
- Consider each individual as a unique individual with specific characteristics and needs and thus accept each individual with his or her positive and negative characteristics
- Cultivate an understanding of each individual within the local context in which they live
- Be empathetic rather than sympathetic towards needs of those who are vulnerable
- Views of all individuals must be valued and taken seriously with objectivity
- Encourage all individuals to express their feelings as well as to participate in decisions which affect them
- Maintain confidentiality
- Work with individuals in ways that enhance their inherent capacities and capabilities and develop their potential
- Appreciate their good efforts and performances since it would be rewarding and reinforcing for further development
- Practice a policy of non discrimination
- Have a respect for the self determination and autonomy of other individuals

### ***6.2 Appropriate Behavior with Children and other Vulnerable Adults***

- Act on concerns and problems immediately
- As far as possible, work with children in a place within the view of others
- Equal attention to be given to all irrespective of their social identity with no favoritism
- Information to be given to concerned staff prior to interaction with children
- Never engage, encourage, neglect or support abuse under any circumstances
- Never stigmatize and humiliate children or others, for example, do not speak badly of a child in front of or within the hearing of other children
- Recognize the individual with her or his name and never use any derogatory name or nickname
- Never use corporal punishment

- Never develop a physical/sexual relationship with any child
- Never behave in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Do not use slang words or abusive language
- Staff and volunteers must wear clothes that are modest and acceptable to the communities that we work with so as to be respected and trusted
- Girls and boys will be given the choice of working with a male or female staff/volunteer where gender may be a consideration such as counseling, medical check-up. If such a need arises from the child then it is to be valued, considered and necessary action to be taken
- Written permission must be taken for children from their legal guardians and themselves in case of adults, before taking their images or case studies/life stories
- Images/photographs of children and others are not to be taken while they are taking bathing or changing clothes. They are to be properly clothed in keeping with local culture
- With regard to case studies, names of children and others must be changed and no personal information to identify the location of individual is to be given. Education sponsorship cases may be treated as an exception where the sponsor needs to be given authentic data.
- Never give any information regarding any individual associated with the organization to media over telephone or in person. Senior management to be informed regarding any coverage by media and have written records on the same from the media with the objective of the coverage.
- Be clear about purpose and inform and guide children and others prior to media coverage.
- Staff and volunteers will not give gifts directly to children. Staff and volunteers will distribute these equally among all children
- One cannot have a personal relationship with any participant from DMT Classes.
- One cannot give personal, office, or any colleague's phone number to any participant in the DMT Class.
- During DMT Classes, one cannot take one's own children to the DMT Class or make them a part of the class in anyway.
- During DMT Class, all Trainers / supervisors/ external visitors phones will be either on silent or off mode. Nobody will receive calls during DMT Classes. Nobody will be allowed to have any children from DMT Class talking on their mobiles to any of the trainer's friends/relatives/family members or other trainers.
- DMT Trainers / supervisor/ programme manager and other staffs are not allowed to take photographs of children and others from the DMT Classes on their phones or video record any of the participants on their phones. Nobody allows listening of music on their phones to the participant or hear music him or herself on the phone while conducting DMT Classes.
- As a DMT Trainer/ supervisor/ programme manager and other staffs will maintain professional boundaries with their clients for their safety. For example DMT Trainer will not express personal emotions like anger, depression or mood swings etc during class. Before touching any participants ask their permission except healing touch (only head), which is a part of process.

- All DMT Trainers as well as supervisor/ programme manager and other staffs who visit the healing recovery programme will maintain the appropriate dress code in the DMT Class
- DMT Trainers will not use any music in class whose lyrics have sexual connotation or sexual indication in lyrics.
- Songs that have discriminatory undertones will not be used as well.
- DMT Trainer / Supervisor will at all given times be engaged with the children in class
- Those associated with KS will refrain from using derogatory language based on someone's race, caste, gender, sexual orientation culture, religion and other identities.
- All Staff members will refrain from developing inappropriate relationships with vulnerable children and adults that is outside the purview of your direct job role in KS.
- No staff member will have a child or a vulnerable adult do something for them that they are supposed to do themselves
- Staff members will not act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- In events where children will be present KS must ensure adequate supervision
- While choosing venues for events and or residential training KS must ensure that venues are properly vetted. This applies to places of stay as well.
- All occasions where children might be required to travel informed consent must be sought from their parents or legal guardians in writing. In case of adult participants their written consent needs to be taken on such occasions.

### ***6.3 Personal Conduct:***

Along with appropriate professional behavior with vulnerable populations employees should ensure their personal code of conduct is in line with the principles upheld in the policy. This includes adhering to the following:

- Refrain from actions that equal to or perpetuate any form of abuse and maltreatment
- Refrain from actions that act against the laws and policies of the state or international laws and policies.
- Adhere to and put into practice as far as practicable the principles upheld in this policy
- Maintain a sense of professionalism and discipline at all times.
- Make sure confidentiality is maintained while discharging duties as per guidelines.
- Ensure transparency and accountability at all times
- Avoid situations that might result in conflicts of interest.
- Uphold the ethical commitments of the organization

## **7. ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE**

### ***7. 1 Accountability Structure for Safeguarding in KS***

- Kolkata Sanved will form a safeguarding committee with a total of 5 members for the purpose of receiving complaints and investigation cases regarding safeguarding.
- It will be overseen by a senior staff member
- It will consist of three other members
- The fifth member will be an external expert will be nominated by KS within the committee
- On forming the safeguarding committee it's all staff and associates must be made aware of those responsible for safeguarding

## ***7.2 Roles and Responsibilities***

### ***7.2a) Monitoring, Evaluation and Implementation***

- Oversee matters related to safeguarding
- Ensure implementation at all levels
- Yearly Review of the policy
- Make amendments to the policy as deemed fit
- Hold regular meetings to discuss progress

### ***7.2b) Orientation and Training***

#### ***The SC will ensure that:***

- staff are trained on the policy
- interns, volunteers, students and others associated are oriented on the policy
- partners and other collaborators, including consultants are oriented on the policy
- Donors are oriented on the policy

### ***7.2c) Reporting***

- Receive reports related to cases of safeguarding
- Process Reports related to cases of safeguarding.
- Compile Annual Report on the progress of the committee's activities

### ***7.2d) Handle Complaints***

- Handle all complaints regarding safeguarding
- Create and maintain standard operating procedures for processing complaints
- Make decisions on disciplinary action based on investigation of cases and consultations with all related parties

### ***7.2e) Liaison and Advocacy***

- Liaison with partner organizations for the purpose of safeguarding
- Advocate for matters of safeguarding
- Conduct resource mapping of organizations that might help with issues of safeguarding

## ***7.3 Role of the Director***

The duties of the director in respect to safeguarding are:

- The director will review the work of the safeguarding committee
- The director might advise the safeguarding committee
- The director might be called to consult on critical cases
- All complaints about the committee will go to the director

#### ***7.4 Role of other staff members***

- All existing staff should orient themselves to the policy so that they understand the policy
- Ensure all staff signs a statement stating that they will adhere to the safeguarding policy
- Include safeguarding training during induction of new staff so that they are aware of their responsibilities towards the children with whom they work and also that they report any allegations of abuse
- All departments must align their policies with the safeguarding policy
- All departments must align their activities with the policy
- All staff members must report instances of abuse that come to their notice
- All staff members must be aware of those who are in the safeguarding community and maintain channels of communication while submitting reports
- All matters of safeguarding must be brought to the notice of the committee
- KS will translate the Policy into Bengali so that it is fully understood by all staff and associates
- Dissemination of the safeguarding policy to funders, donors and others as deemed fit

### ***8. Handling Complaints and Violations***

#### ***8.1 Steps to take on disclosure***

- On receiving sensitive information the concerned person must determine if he/she has the expertise to intervene
- This can be done with the help of the response flowchart
- The concerned person has to answer the question “Is the matter at hand critical?”
- If the answer is yes then the concerned person should report it to his/her supervisor
- If the answer is not sure the person concerned should still report it to the supervisor
- If the answer is “The matter is not serious” The person should determine if he/she can handle the matter on his own. This can be determined by answering the questions “Have I handled such a situation before?” “Do I have the expertise to do so” and “Am I comfortable doing so?” If answers are negative the concerned individual should report it to the supervisor.
- If the answer is positive then also reporting should be done to the focal point with the action that was taken in writing

#### ***8.2 Reporting the Incident***

After reporting to the immediate supervisor, the person concerned submits a written report to the safeguarding committee. All complaints must be submitted in writing, completing the form "Reporting Format" provided in Annex 2. The person must sign the report. If a person submits an anonymous report it the committee must uphold the concerned person's anonymity.

### ***8.3 Response to the Complaint***

On receiving the complaint the safe guarding committee must arrange a meeting to discuss the matter. The meeting must be held at the earliest exceeding not more than 3 days of receiving the complaint. The decision of the safeguarding committee will remain final. In special cases where doubts arise in how the case has been processed the director or an external expert can choose to review the case and over ride the decision of the safeguarding committee. Wherever necessary grave and serious cases will be reported to the legal authorities as per the law of the land.

### ***8.4 Disciplinary Actions***

It should be remembered that KS works with vulnerable people and children, especially those in government homes but also those on railway platforms, streets and in other difficult circumstances, who receive very little respect or understanding It is therefore particularly important that those working with them as DMT therapists or in other capacity do not harm or hurt them in any way, physically or emotionally. Often comments and remarks are made that can be construed as very painful leading to emotional distress which in turn defeats the very purpose and philosophy of DMT. The violations pertain to abuse by employees within the ambit of their work in KS.

- In respect to allegations related to **verbal and emotional abuse**, the accused will receive a warning in writing. A second warning can also be issued if another incident is reported. The third time it occurs could result in the termination of the services of that staff member
- If an associate of KS is found using a child in sessions or within the office for exploitative purposes he/ she will receive two warnings after which their services will be terminated
- For physical abuse the accused will receive one warning failing which their services will be terminated
- In cases of sexual abuse the person concerned will immediately be suspended to protect the victim. A thorough investigation will be made into the matter. If the assault is proven or there is even an iota of doubt regarding the persons conduct the action taken will be in the best interest of the child/ vulnerable adult. Proven sexual misconduct will result in immediate termination
- In must be noted in all cases those accused will get a chance to prove themselves and a thorough investigation will be conducted

- If allegations are proven to be wrong on the alleged person then the organization will take necessary steps to retain the reputation and position of the person in the organization.

#### ***8.4a) Violations by Employees***

All violations by employees will be dealt with through the guidelines laid down in section 8.4.

#### ***8.4b) Violations by Interns and Volunteers***

Interns/ Volunteer/ Collaborators / will be subject to the same disciplinary actions as employees in the case of physical, sexual and emotional abuse

However in the case of interns coming into KS through partner organizations the following procedure must be followed

- Report to the partner organization
- Investigate the matter
- Jointly decide on action
- If KS is not satisfied with the agreement reached KS can choose to terminate the services of the intern/volunteer from its organizational activities and work where the alleged person was involved

#### ***8.4c) Critical Cases***

In cases where the matter is deemed critical, the services of an employee/volunteer/ intern/ consultant/ collaborator/ might be terminated without warning and with immediate effect. The concerned individual will get a chance to represent his/her self. The final decision will depend on the safeguarding committee who will be guided by the principle the best interest of the child/ vulnerable adult. If needed KS will also report the case to the legal authorities as per the law of the land.

#### ***8.4d) External Complaints against employees***

Taking into consideration external complaints against employees and associate KS must keep the following guidelines:

- All complaints against employees from partner organizations and other associates must be presented to the safeguarding committee. The safeguarding committee must investigate the matter immediately and take disciplinary action
- If a complaint arises in the personal context of an employee KS must determine if the case falls within legal obligation
- If the case does not fall within legal obligation KS must determine if the nature of the accusation poses a significant risk to the working of the organization. If so KS can take up the matter
- The matter must be investigated thoroughly



- On investigation if the matter is proven the organization can take disciplinary action as highlighted in the previous session
- If the conduct of the employee within his/her personal context violates laws and is a criminal offence the committee is obligated to investigate. If the person is found guilty the safeguarding committee must take disciplinary action and terminate the services of the employee
- While handling external complaints the committee must make sure to handle matters without bias or discrimination

#### ***8.4e) Violations by the safeguarding committee***

- If the safeguarding committee is found guilty of mishandling a case or is accused of an incident of harm or abuse, he/she will be suspended immediately from his/her position. A report will be submitted to the director. On investigation if the director finds the person guilty he/she will no longer be eligible to be a part of the safeguarding committee. This will count as a warning in his/her employment record. The disciplinary actions applicable for the employees as stated above in section 8.4 will also apply to this member, if found guilty
- The director on advice may choose to dissolve the entire safeguarding committee

#### ***8.5 Handling Reports of Abuse by Partners***

Many a times DMT practitioners or others might witness their clients in a situation of harm or abuse.

In such a situation certain measures can be taken:

- A report must be made to the safeguarding committee
- The safeguarding committee will hold a meeting regarding the complaint with no less than 3 days passing
- The safeguarding committee will discuss the matter with the contact person in the partner organization
- Both parties will work together to reach a resolution
- If the partner organization is unwilling to take action against the complaint up KS will then decide if the partnership is in the best interest of the organization
- If the case requires immediate action and KS gets no compliance from the partner organization, they are bound to report the matter to the appropriate agency
- Note: In such cases KS can only act within legal obligation. That is KS is accountable to mitigate risks that arise in the purview of its work. For example it can take up a complaint from a participant in its DMT class; it does not have the legal standing to enforce its policies to matters beyond the purview of its work. For example KS cannot take up the case of a child who is in no way connected to its work but resides in one of its partner organizations
- However as active citizens KS might choose to take up such causes as a part of its larger efforts through advocacy

- In situations where mandatory reporting is compulsory by the law KS will take action

### ***8.6 Handling abuse by funders and donors***

A case may arise where KS is receiving funds from an organization that is not complying with the safeguarding policy in this case.

In such cases the safeguarding committee must:

- Meet to review the matter
- Talk to the concerned person
- The safeguarding committee might decide to withdraw from partnerships that violate the policy

### ***8.7 Breach of Confidentiality***

Breach of Confidentiality in the purview of work is a very grave matter. Such breaches will be reported to the safeguarding committee immediately. If the person is found guilty he/she will receive two warnings after which their services will be terminated. This is also applicable to those facilitating TOT sessions as well as those who come across sensitive information.

### ***8.8 Media***

While any form of representation takes place the issue of confidentiality must be taken into consideration:

- Pictures / videos / written material of KS's beneficiaries can only be produced with invitation or permission from KS
- While taking said audio visual materials the person's name or personal details cannot be shared
- No one will be photographed without prior permission from the organization where he/she resides
- Even if the organization agrees the participant must give written consent
- This consent cannot be got through coercive means
- Sharing of information collated and produced by KS cannot be done without written permission
- Those in violating these clauses will immediately be suspended from collaborations with KS i.e. their association with KS will be terminated

### ***8.9 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy***

- KS will review its safeguarding policy every two years to make sure it is up to date with developments in the field.

- The Safeguarding committee will maintain a checklist of tasks to be undertaken every year.

This checklist should include:

- Whether orientations were successfully completed
- The number of cases reported
- The number of cases processed
- The number of meetings held
- The number of meetings held with partner organizations
- The number of reviews conducted on the policy
- The number of updates included in the policy
- The number of policy violations

The number of disciplinary actions undertaken:

- In the end of the year they will submit an annual report to the director.
- The director will review the report at the end of the year

### **9. Useful Resources**

KS will make efforts to identify resources through periodical resource mapping in communities of its operations so as to collaborate with different agencies for referrals and support as and when required to cater to the identified needs of the children and vulnerable adults that KS supports through its services. Based on the mapped resources, KS will maintain an inventory with contact details of all the identified agencies for each of the operational areas of KS and ensure that these are easily available and accessible.

### **11. Annex**

#### **12. 1: Self Disclosure Form**

I..... (Name)..... (Designation and name of the organization/company/institution wherever applicable) of ..... (Address) have the opportunity to work with Kolkata Sanved as a ..... (Specify: staff/ volunteer / intern / consultant / contractor / partner NGO / specify, if any other) from..... (DD/MM/YY) to..... (DD/MM/YY wherever applicable), hereby declare that:

1. All details provided regarding my contact details, credentials, background and references are true to my knowledge.
2. I have not in the past been made responsible for any kind of illegitimate or inappropriate behavior with children. I have not been engaged in any kind of activity that hampers the dignity of any child /

children and their physical and mental integrity / space / privacy. I have no criminal record or any enquiry is raised against me / my company against any breach / violation of children's rights.

3. I have gone through the 'Safeguarding Policy of Kolkata Sanved and taken due note of its implication on its stakeholders. I am specifically aware about the appropriate behavior norm set in the policy relevant to my role. I thereby respect the CPPS and conform to all the guidelines and procedures set in the policy document and in the appropriate code of conduct.

4. I have been informed that Kolkata Sanved reserves the right to raise an enquiry and consult me and other relevant witnesses and associates in case of a suspicion raised on account of my behavior that has direct implication on children and vulnerable adults.

5. I am also aware that the organization may take appropriate administrative and legal steps as deemed appropriate by the authority. I shall comply and cooperate on such occasion.

6. in case found guilty and in the event of termination of contract, the organization reserves the right to inform relevant institutions working with children and vulnerable adults.

Signature of the concerned person:

.....

Date.....

Place.....

Signature of Kolkata Sanved Representative:

.....

Date.....

Place.....

## Annex 2: Reporting Format

- i. Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on the concerns of somebody else.
  
- ii. Brief description of what has prompted the concerns (include dates and times of any specific incidents; mention the name of the witness, if any):
  
- iii. Observations – mention the Physical signs, Behavioral signs or Indirect signs
  
- iv. Has the person concerned been spoken to? If so what was said? What was the concerned persons situation during the discussion.
  
- v. Anybody alleged to be the abuser? If so give details (mention whether volunteer/ staff/ consultant/ vendor/ donor/ visitor/ parents/ any other)
  
- vi. Whether the issue has been consulted internally or externally? Yes/ No.....

vii. Give details (name of person, name of organization, if any, date and time).

viii. If any immediate action has been taken? If so, what and by whom?

ix. Whether the person requires medical attention? Yes/No.....

x. Any other related information to be shared in the best interest of the person concerned. Please mention below.

xi. Information about the person concerned :  
*Name of the child*.....*age*.....

xii. Details of the Reporting Person:  
*Name of the Person*

*Contact details (address, contact numbers, email id*

*Nature of contact or relation with the child*

*Signature..... Date.....*

*Submitted to.....*

Follow up update to be included in the same document:

Date of Follow up reporting:

What actions have been taken?

What is the current situation of the child?

Date of Closure:

*Signature*..... *Date*.....

*Submitted to*.....

## Reporting Format

xiii. Reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details



xiv. Brief description of what has prompted the concerns (include dates and times of any specific incidents; mention the name of the witness, if any):

xv. Observations – mention the Physical signs, Behavioral signs or Indirect signs

xvi. Has the child been spoken to? If so what was said? The child's situation during the discussion.

xvii. Anybody alleged to be the abuser? If so give details (mention whether volunteer/ staff/ consultant/ vendor/ donor/ visitor/ parents/ any other)

xviii. Whether the issue has been consulted internally or externally? Yes/  
No.....

xix. Give details (name of person, name of organization, if any, date and time).

xx. If any immediate action has been taken? If so, what and by whom?

xxi. Whether the child requires medical attention? Yes/No.....

xxii. Any other related information to be shared in the best interest of the child. Please mention below.

xxiii. Information about the child:  
*Name of the child.....age.....*

xxiv. Details of the Reporting Person:  
*Name of the Person*

*Contact details (address, contact numbers, email id*

*Nature of contact or relation with the child*

*Signature*..... *Date*.....

*Submitted to*.....

