

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN PUBLIC SPACES AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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GROUND RULE



1. Building Capacity towards Upholding the Rights of Children

Awareness camps at the panchayat/ ward level, on a quarterly basis by experts, covering

- a) Legislations
- b) Government mechanisms (from village to state)
- c) Best practises
- d) Existing schemes and programmes
- e) TOT to be the responsibility of WCD



2. Empowerment and Protection at the Local Government level

- The Village, Block and District Child Protection Committees should be statutory bodies (with representation of adolescent boys and girls)
- Adolescent girls & boys councils with periodic discussion with all
- Create a child/women friendly environment



3. Ward and grama panchayat level

- Every ward or gram panchayat must have a girl child and women protection policy
- Accessible formats with Designated person
- The gram panchayat development plans (GPDPs), Metropolitan City Master Plans, Ward plans and Disaster Management Plans must reflect the issues of AGs.
- Vulnerability Mapping



4. For All Organizations / Institutions

- Written adolescent girls protection policy
- Designated officials to ensure compliance



5. Organizations Working Directly with Girl Children

For all employees

- Stringent background checks (which may include police verification)
- Proper training



6. Employee Code of Conduct

- In line with Indian law and international human rights standards and conventions
- Based on zero tolerance of abuse and exploitation
- Safe Space Commitment

7. Organizational Obligations

- Support the complainant to make a complaint
- Cooperate in any resulting investigation by providing access to all relevant materials
- Refer the matter to the Internal Committee

8. Awareness

All organizations and Child Care Professionals have to display prominently

- The Child Protection Policy
- CHILDLINE 1098
- Contact details of designated officer for child protection in the organization

9. Data Collection: Government or Private

- Follow contemporary data collection standards (International Charter for Ethical Research Involving Children).
- Clearance from an appropriate ethics committee.
- Not harm or traumatise children in the data collection process.
- Mask all personally identifiable information (PII), and destroy it after use.
- Time limit of data retention to be clearly disclosed as part of the free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) process.
- The child should always have the option to opt-out or withdraw the information given at any time, including in adulthood without time limit.
- All staff must be trained on ethical practices and age- and disability appropriate supports to allow children to express their views on matters concerning them, with due respect to the socio-economic background of the family and community.



10. Organizations Working in Healthcare

- Doctors, counsellors, teachers, health workers, nurses, must follow the child protection policy
- Aware of care and support services
- No healthcare professional can refuse treatment or discriminate (caste, gender, religious belief)
- Dignified ways in which to examine Victims
- Services towards therapy/rehabilitation of children should be parent-inclusive/CCTV



11. Schools, learning centres and hostels

- Safe and accessible environment
- Strong SMCs
- Students Councils
- access to the community meetings / council/panchayat
- Accessible complaint mechanism
- Trained Councillors
- Regular trainings on rights and redressal



12. CHILDLINE Services and Aftercare

- Functional with trained individuals available to receive calls.
- Fluent in all the local languages of the State.
- Beyond 1098 also via SMS, WhatsApp (video and text) including sign language.
- Links to all protection mechanisms.
- Organizations in charge of providing shelter should be sensitized on the specific requirements of children with disabilities.
- Identity of informant to be protected (not made public).



We Should.....

- NOT blame the victims
- Make ALL spaces safe
- Teach ALL families and schools
- RTE up to 18 years (to understand all aspects of citizenship, of which this is one)
- The entire system should work
- **Monitor the functioning of the existing mechanisms (citizen watch)**





Thank You