



# The Barnahus Barnahus Network's Child Safeguarding Policy

May 2026

## Our Commitment

The Barnahus Barnahus Network is fully committed to safeguarding all children involved in, or in contact with, the Barnahus Barnahus Network activities to the maximum extent possible from violence, abuse, exploitation, and harm.

The Barnahus Network Secretariat has a zero tolerance to harmful behaviour against children and pursues policies to prevent and respond to these issues. We aim to ensure that everyone associated with the organisation is aware of and responds appropriately to issues of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury and any other harm against children.

## Definitions

- *Child* is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years.
- *Violence* is here defined as per the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- *Child Safeguarding* refers to the set of policies, procedures and practice that the Barnahus Network Secretariat have in place to protect children from violence.

## Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to any individual engaged in activities involving children through the Barnahus Barnahus Network Secretariat, including, but not limited to:

- Barnahus Barnahus Network staff, whether national, international, full time, part time or engaged on short-term contracts, e.g., interns, consultants, researchers etc.
- Project partners, representatives from external agencies and volunteers cooperating with the Barnahus Barnahus Network Secretariat, when child participation is involved.
- Donors, journalists, celebrities, politicians and other people who take part in activities organised by the Barnahus Barnahus Network Secretariat involving child participation.

The Policy requires:

- The Barnahus Network recruits staff that are suited to apply strict child safeguarding practices. Background checks are conducted upon recruitment.
- Everyone associated with the Barnahus Barnahus Network is aware of their obligations and responds appropriately to issues of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury or other harm against children.
- Anyone representing or acting on behalf of the Barnahus Barnahus Network Secretariat behaves appropriately towards children and never abuses the position of

trust that comes with being associated with the Barnahus Barnahus Network Secretariat.

- Everyone representing the Barnahus Barnahus Network takes part in creating a safe environment for children who come into contact with the organisation.
- Representatives organising child participation events in the context of Barnahus Barnahus Network activities sign the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Everyone associated with the Barnahus Barnahus Network is aware of and adheres to the Guidance on photos of children (see below).
- The Barnahus Network commits to regularly informing all staff members about the child safeguarding policy, including reporting mechanisms and appropriate behaviour.

Breaches of this policy will be reported to the Barnahus Network Secretary General and/or the Barnahus Network Designated Safeguarding Officer, and, where appropriate, to the relevant national authorities.

Breaches may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. For partners and contractors, breaches may result in termination of the relationship, including contractual and partnership agreements.

## **Child Safeguarding Principles**

The Child Safeguarding Policy is guided by the principles of:

- *Zero tolerance of abuse and exploitation of children who are involved in or come in contact with the Barnahus Barnahus Network activities.*
- *Personal responsibility.* All staff of the Barnahus Network Secretariat must demonstrate high standards of behaviour towards children both in their private and professional lives. They must do all that they can to prevent, report and respond to any concerns of the policy.
- *Accountability to children and their communities.* Through internal systems, standards and practice the Barnahus Network Secretariat will be accountable to the people we aim to serve.
- *Children participation and non-discrimination.* Children should be empowered to understand their rights and what they can do if there is a problem or a concern.
- *The Best Interest of any children involved.* When dealing with a Child Safeguarding concern, the Barnahus Network Secretariat will strive to ensure children's safety, health, and well-being, always placing the best interests of the child at the centre.
- *Confidentiality.* All Child Safeguarding concerns/reports/ will be dealt with on a need-to-know basis and all records will be held securely, according to GDPR, Swedish data protection and privacy laws.
- *Timeliness.* Given the potential for increased or repeated abuse, timely responses are essential on reporting and responding to concerns.
- *Partnership.* The Barnahus Network Secretariat will work together with other agencies and partners to promote Child Safeguarding within organisations and Child Protection in the community.

## Reporting procedure

It is not the responsibility of the Barnahus Network Secretariat to investigate child abuse. It is, however, **an obligation for each staff, partners and relevant others to report concerns or incidents.**

If a person who works for, or on behalf of, the Barnahus Network Secretariat is concerned about the possible abuse of a child, including concerns that relate to the behaviour of a person working for, or on behalf of, the Barnahus Network Secretariat, it must be reported.

Suspicious are to be reported to the police or relevant local authority without undue delay - and to the Secretary General of the Barnahus Network Secretariat and/or the Safeguarding Officer of the Barnahus Network Secretariat. The Safeguarding Officer will write a brief report that will be stored in a safe location, so that we have an account about the incident and our action.

**Safeguarding officer:** Ms Olivia Lind Haldorsson [olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu](mailto:olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu)

### Who to contact (follow this order) in Sweden:

- Immediate danger (ongoing violence): Call the Police on 112.
- Suspicion of violence / concern: Contact Social Services (the Social Welfare Committee) in the child's municipality. You can find contact details via the municipality's switchboard or website.
- Police (non-emergency): Call 114 14 to report a crime against a child.
- Barnahus Network Safeguarding Officer: Ms Olivia Lind Haldorsson [olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu](mailto:olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu)
- Support / Advice: You can call:
  - BRIS Adult Helpline: 077-150 50 50
  - National Women's Helpline (Kvinnofridslinjen): 020-50 50 50 (also for relatives)

### Outside Sweden:

- Immediate danger (ongoing violence): Call the Police on the [national emergency line](#).
- Consult with the Designated Safeguarding Officer: Ms Olivia Lind Haldorsson [olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu](mailto:olivia.lind.haldorsson@barnahus.eu)

### WHAT TO DO:

- Take concerns seriously;
- Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of concerns;
- Support the child, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- Act appropriately and effectively and co-operate in the process of investigation;
- Be guided through all processes by the principle of the best interest of the child;
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of the child;

- Work in partnership with parents/carers and professionals to ensure the protection of the child;
- Report according to the local procedures.

**DON'T:**

- Investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations;
- Ensure the child that the information given will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

**Document the following information (as far as possible):**

- The name & contact of the person who has given the report;
- The child's details;
- The alleged perpetrators details (where identified);
- Details of the concern – please note that you should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- Whether the child is currently safe and the current location of the child;
- Whether emergency medical intervention is necessary;
- Who else knows of the potential abuse;
- What actions have been taken to date;
- The name, position and location of the person receiving the referral.

## **Reporting technology-facilitated (online) violence**

If you receive, or come across suspected child abuse images or inappropriate depictions of children:

- Contact the police at 114 14 or go into a police station to report.
- Do not delete the message until you have spoken to the police.
- Do not share, forward or download the images out of respect for the children, but also, since you may be committing a criminal act.
- Inform the Child Safeguarding Officer without delay, briefly describing what occurred (without sharing the material). The Child Safeguarding Officer will write a brief report that will be stored in a safe location, so that we have an account about the incident and our action.

The police will decide whether an investigation will be opened, and if further action is needed from you or the Barnahus Network.

If you come across suspected child abuse images online, inform the police. You can also report to the ECPAT hotline: <https://ecpat.se/hotline/hotline-eng/> but remember that you in any case should inform the police.

## Code of Conduct

Staff, partners and other representatives must never:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children.
- Engage in sexual activity or have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 years regardless of the age of majority/consent or custom locally.
- Develop relationships with children which could be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Act in ways that may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions, or offer advice which is inappropriate or abusive.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative.
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment or favour to some children to the exclusion of others.
- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others in a manner which could be interpreted as inappropriate.
- Expose a child to inappropriate images, films and websites including pornography and extreme violence.
- Place themselves in a position where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct.
- Take photos, audio or audio-visually record or otherwise depict children without their and their caregivers' explicit consent.
- Collect, store or disseminate data about individual children.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. Staff, partners, and other representatives should avoid actions or behaviour, which may allow behaviour to be misrepresented, constitutes poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.

## Photo and film policy<sup>1</sup>

Images of children and young people can play an important role in raising awareness of children's rights and needs. They can empower children, amplify their voices, and support advocacy efforts. Images may also serve as powerful tools to highlight violations of children's rights, shaping public understanding of issues such as conflict, disasters, poverty, violence, and homelessness, and encouraging action and support. Equally, images can communicate hope, progress, and positive interventions, helping to mobilise resources to advance children's rights.

However, the use of images of children and young people presents increasing safeguarding concerns, particularly in the context of rapidly evolving digital technologies, the widespread use of social media, and the ease with which information can be shared, stored, and reused online.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms children's rights to privacy, dignity, and protection. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has emphasised that all forms of media must respect these rights. In today's digital environment, this responsibility extends

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<sup>1</sup> This policy draws on the CBSS Guidance on the use of photos of children

to all individuals who access, download, store, or share information, images, or videos of children through media platforms, websites, or social networks.

The Barnabus Network is committed to safeguarding all children who come into contact with its work, including through the ethical and responsible use of images. Particular care must be taken to ensure that images do not expose children to risk or compromise their rights.

### **Risks**

The risks associated with capturing and sharing images of children are significant and may have immediate and long-term consequences for children's safety, privacy, and well-being.

The use of images of children may pose risks, including:

- Images may be taken, published, or shared without the child's knowledge or informed consent.
- Images may misrepresent the child's identity, experience, or situation, potentially undermining their dignity and integrity.
- Images and associated commentary may form part of a child's long-term digital footprint, which may affect their safety, self-perception, and how they are perceived by others in the future.
- Images may be copied, altered, downloaded, or shared by third parties, including for harmful or exploitative purposes.
- Images may be manipulated, distorted, or used in unintended or inappropriate contexts.
- Once shared online, images may be subject to platform terms and conditions, including potential reuse or licensing by third parties.
- Children may be identified or located through images or accompanying information, increasing risks of harm, including exploitation, grooming, or trafficking.
- Images may appear in search results or be circulated without context, potentially leading to misunderstanding or misuse.

### **Guidance**

Before taking, publishing, or sharing images of children, the following should be carefully considered:

- What is the purpose of the image? Could the intended message be communicated without using an identifiable image of a child?
- Has the child been informed in an age-appropriate manner and given their consent?
- Has informed consent also been obtained from the child's parent or legal guardian, where required?
- Is the image respectful, appropriate, and non-exploitative, particularly in situations of vulnerability?
- Could the use of the image compromise the child's privacy, safety, dignity, or data protection rights?

- How and where will the image be used, and who may have access to it?
- How long will the image remain available, and is it possible to control its future use?
- Is the use of the image in the best interests of the child?
- What are the potential short- and long-term impacts on the child, including into adulthood?
- Would you consider it appropriate to take and share a similar image of yourself, your own child, or a child known to you?

## **Date of Policy and Review**

This policy was reviewed and updated in **May 2026**.

The Barnahus Network monitors and reviews the safeguarding policy and measures regularly. The next review will take place in 2027.