

Scope

This policy applies to all ROWONTARIO Staff and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

The forms of abuse referred to in this policy statement are hereby defined so that all may have a clear understanding of the behaviours that will not be tolerated in respect to ROWONTARIO's participants, employees, volunteers, or visitors.

Of particular note, child abuse is any form of physical harm, emotional deprivation, neglect or sexual mistreatment which can result in injury or psychological damage to a child and occurs when the person(s) responsible for the child's care, inflicts or allows to be inflicted, any injury or harm upon the child. For the purposes of this Policy, a Child is an individual under the age of 18.

1. Physical Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraints.
2. Sexual Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, any penetration or attempted penetration with a penis, digit or object of the vagina or anus, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit including pornography. Any form of direct sexual contact between child and an adult is abusive since it involves a child who by virtue of his or her age and position in life is unable to give consent.
3. Emotional Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, a chronic attack on an individual's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, and habitual scapegoating, blaming. Examples of emotional abuse include, but are not limited to:
 - chronically ridiculed, degraded, criticized or humiliated
 - habitually ignored or rejected in preference for other children
 - subjected to frightening punishment such as being locked in a closet
 - enticed, bribed or forced into self-destructive behaviour (e.g. drugs, alcohol)
 - scapegoat (consistently blaming a child for that which has gone wrong)
 - witnessing violence in the family home between parents and/or other family members.
4. Verbal Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.
5. Cyber-Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group. The practice of cyber-bullying is not limited to children and is sometimes referred to as cyberstalking or cyber harassment when perpetrated by or against adults.
6. Psychological Abuse is defined as, but not limited to, communication of an abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitive behaviour, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, sexual preference or family dynamics.

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7. Neglect is defined as, but not limited to, any behaviour that leads to a failure to provide services which are necessary such as failing to assess and respond to changes in health status, withdrawing basic necessities such as adequate and nourishing food, healthy and clean living environment, failing to provide supervision appropriate for the child's age, mental, psychological or physical state, refusing or withdrawing physical or emotional support.
 8. Harassment is defined as, but not limited to, any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.

Policy

ROWONTARIO will not tolerate any form of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, cyber-, or psychological abuse nor any form of neglect or harassment. We will take steps to protect all our participants, especially minors.

Board approved last: April 5, 2019

Review date: April 5, 2019

Operational Procedures

PROCEDURE IN SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

All staff in their professional capacity are required by law under the Child and Family Services Act to report any suspected child abuse to the local Children's Aid Society. In doing so staff must comply with the following protocol in making a report to the CAS:

Note: Utmost discretion must be observed

- report immediately to the Executive Director/Board President
 - do not discuss with other staff
 - do not discuss with alleged abuser
 - do not discuss with family
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- Staff do not conduct an investigation of suspected abuse. Investigating abuse is the responsibility of the local CAS.
 - All staff have a personal responsibility to report any suspected case of child abuse. Reporting a concern to another staff or Board Member is not sufficient. **Any staff with a concern must report their concern to the CAS**, even if advised against doing so by a ROWONTARIO volunteer or staff member.
 - The local CAS office in the home city of the individual will be contacted.
 - If staff are uncertain if a case of suspected abuse is one which must be reported, they can notify the CAS of the details and the CAS will advise if the case is one which should be reported.
 - Once a report has been made, ROWONTARIO shall follow the instructions given by the CAS as to what action needs to be done to safeguard the child concerned.
 - Staff must make, and keep in a private secured file, detailed notes of the disclosure or reasons for the report and their actions and notify the Executive Director/President of any report of a case of suspected abuse to CAS with appropriate details of the concern.
 - The Executive Director shall notify the President of the Board of Directors that a report of suspected abuse has been made, the details of the concern, and actions recommended by the CAS for ROWONTARIO to follow.

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- *In the case that a staff member/volunteer is the subject of a disclosure or is suspected, that individual must not be informed unless the CAS so directs. If the Executive Director is the subject, the staff member should call the CAS directly without informing them and notify the President of the Board or a designate immediately. Any member of the Board Executive could be notified if the originally designated people are inappropriate to be involved directly or indirectly.*
 - Where a staff member is the subject of a disclosure, they will be suspended with pay until the complaint is resolved. When appropriate, disciplinary action up to, and including, termination and/or the seeking of criminal charges will be taken.
 - The Executive Director and Board President will determine if this case needs to be reported to RCA. Any situation involving coaches or umpires will result in immediate notification of RCA.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROCEDURES

1. Use a team approach, i.e. the Rule of two or group rule.
The two-adult or group rule demands that each child-oriented activity is supervised by at least two properly screened adults or is done with a group of children. One adult should never be alone with one child or youth. This reduces the risk of abuse and the chance of false accusations of abuse.
2. Report suspicious behaviour immediately to the Executive Director/President.
Alleged suspicious behaviour or misconduct on the part of any adult should be confronted and reported immediately, with appropriate documentation.
3. Provide for easy viewing of classrooms and other areas where student activities occur.
Where feasible, doors to rooms occupied by students should be equipped with windows. As an alternative, doors should be left open when rooms are occupied.

SCREENING OF STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

As a reasonable measure to help protect the children and individuals the organization works with, we are committed to a thorough screening of all staff and volunteers (deemed required) before they commence activities with the organization.

All individuals will be interviewed and a minimum of two references will be checked in addition to strict compliance to ROWONTARIO's Screening Policy.

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors annually.

Last reviewed: April 5, 2019