

YMCA Europe 2008 Festival

Child Protection Policy

The protection, care and welfare of all children and young people attending the YMCA Europe 2008 Festival and using our premises and services are our main concerns. The Festival is fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of all children and young people who it has direct or indirect contact with. Prague Festival staff and volunteers must, at all time, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of all children and young people, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles, ethos and values of the YMCA.

Prague Festival Festival's Code of Practice

Staff or volunteers representing Prague Festival can help protect themselves from false accusations by not:

Spending time alone with young people away from others;

Contacting young people outside the activity or the project in which they meet them.

Staff and Volunteers should *never*

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow young people or other staff and volunteers to use inappropriate language
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in fun
- Show favouritism to any individuals
- Rely on just their own or the organisation's good name to protect them
- Permit abusive behaviour such as bullying, taunting, racist behaviour
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- Drink alcohol while in a child care role, or offer alcohol to under 18's while in a child care role.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as crushes or tantrums
- Exaggerate or trivialise any child abuse issues
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest
- Deliberately place yourself or others in a potentially compromising situation
- Believe that "it could never happen to me"

Staff and volunteers should *always*

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Plan activities which involve more than one person being present, or ensure that
- other adults are within sight or hearing wherever possible

- Respect everyone's right to personal privacy
- Be available to listen to the concerns of young participants, and to refer them to the counseling service for additional support where appropriate
- Encourage young participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing such issues
- Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special caution is required when dealing with topics of a sensitive nature to young people

Reporting and Monitoring Procedure

If any staff member or volunteer has an awareness of any issue pertaining to child protection it is their duty to inform in confidence the Daily Manager or Health and Safety Officer.

A member of staff or volunteer may become concerned of a suspected abuse or neglect of any child, or receive such information from a parent or third party. In this event s/he must inform the Daily Manager within one hour. The Daily Manager will make a written note of both the time and nature of the concern and notify the Festival Manager.

A situation may arise where a member of staff or volunteer is suspected of abusing, neglecting or mistreating a child. In this case, the Festival Manager, or in his absence the Daily Manager, will suspend that member of staff and report to the appropriate authority who will consider appropriate action based on the evidence presented.

Lost / Missing Children

A child who has become detached from his / her responsible adult may feel afraid and frightened. This may lead to an over reliance for protection from other adults in contact with him / her. Staff and volunteers need to be aware that in this situation the child is considered to be vulnerable and potentially at risk.

The missing persons station is located in the Communications Centre (number 18) to act as a place of safe haven for missing persons / children. All group leaders will be notified of this and the procedures for reporting missing children.

Discovering a lost child.

- If a staff or volunteer suspects a child is lost they should immediately attempt to calm the child.
- They should attempt to find out the last known location of the child's carer in a sensitive manner.
- If the carer cannot be located reasonably quickly the adult should immediately inform the Health and Safety Officer who will arrange for the child to be taken to a place of safety.

- The Health and Safety Officer will then inform the Daily Manager who will attempt via festival communications channels to locate the carer.
- In the event that the carer cannot be located the child's National Coordinator will be contacted to a) provide care for the child and b) establish what has happened to the carer
- If after a reasonable time neither the carer nor National Coordinator can be located the Festival Manager will notify the relevant local authorities.
- Each case of missing children will be logged in the incident book by the Daily Manager.

Reporting a Missing Child.

- If a child is suspected of being missing from a group, the group leader or responsible adult will inform the Communications Centre who will then inform the Daily Manager
- They should give a description of the child e.g. age, gender, colour, and if possible the last known location.
- The Daily Manager will note down the time of notification and description of the child along with a brief record of action taken in the incident book.