

## **Protection concept**

### **for the day care centres of the Studierendenwerk Vorderpfalz**

In accordance with Section 8a SGB VIII, child day-care centres have a statutory duty to protect children in the event of a risk to their welfare.

When dealing with the issue of child endangerment, it is necessary to consider the various ways in which children can be put at risk. It is about accepting the crossing of borders as a fact and taking precautions through various measures. Only then will educational professionals be able to deal with the situation professionally and act quickly and safely in acute cases.

As the responsible body, we see it as our most important task to create the best possible conditions for the children entrusted to us in order to support their successful development. This includes not only taking children seriously, but also protecting them to the best of our knowledge from boundary violations and abuse.

This concept intends to review our daily routine critically and to develop a culture that enables children and adults to seek help and support in critical situations.

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct intends to clarify to all persons involved the pedagogical attitude that is expected in our facilities. The educational staff all sign the code and declare their agreement with it.

New employees are introduced to this Code of Conduct during their induction and by signing the Code of Conduct they declare their agreement with it.

1. I am committed to protecting all children from abuse. I am committed to strengthening children in their rights and to strengthening and protecting them in the individual development of their self-assurance, self-awareness and self-confidence.
2. I cultivate an appreciative and respectful approach and engage in conversations on an equal footing with all children, parents and professionals.
3. I take a stand against discriminatory, violent and sexist behaviour and intervene.
4. I protect the children entrusted to my care against:
  - Verbal violence (belittling, devaluing, exposing, ostracising, threatening, frightening)
  - Physical violence
  - Sexual violence and sexual exploitation
  - Abuse of power
  - Utilisation of dependencies
5. I respect the children's personal privacy. I am mindful and support the children's self-perception by taking their statements seriously and accepting them as fact.
6. I orientate myself to the individual needs of the children and consider their personal development. The child decides on closeness and distance in joint contact, but I still maintain my personal boundaries.
7. I respect the children's individual body awareness and orientate physical contact to the children's personal needs.
8. I know that children are also sexual beings and I support their sexual development.
9. I name the genitals and set specific boundaries for the children's interaction with each other in order to prevent injuries.
10. I support my colleagues in stressful situations and get support myself.
11. I accept and recognise my own boundaries.

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Place, date

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Signature of our staff

## **Information on recognising and assessing serious indications of a risk to a child's welfare within the meaning of Section 8a SGB VIII - protection mandate**

### **1. "Significant evidence"**

The trigger for fulfilling the protection mandate in accordance with Section 8a SGB VIII is a "strong indication" that the welfare of a child or young person is at risk.

Significant indications that a child's welfare is at risk are indications or information about actions against children and adolescents or living conditions that endanger the physical, mental or emotional welfare of the child or adolescent. Regardless of whether they are the result of an abusive exercise of parental care, neglect of the child or adolescent, failure on the part of the parents through no fault of their own or the behaviour of a third party (see also Section 1666 BGB).

We make basic distinction between the following manifestations that jeopardise a child's welfare:

- Physical and emotional neglect,
- Mental abuse,
- Physical abuse and
- Sexual violence

Indications for professionals to recognise dangerous situations are essentially to be found in the experience and actions of the young person as well as in the living situation, the family situation, parental parenting behaviour, developmental support, traumatising life events and the social environment. They must be considered on an age-specific basis. The special situation of (chronically) ill and disabled children must be taken into account. The ability and willingness of legal guardians to recognise problems cooperate and be motivated to accept help from third parties also plays a major role.

In principle, the following indications (without claiming to be exhaustive) may (but do not necessarily have to) indicate a risk to the child's welfare:

### **Strong indications that the child's welfare is at risk**

#### **Semblance**

Massive or repetitive injuries (bruises, welts, scars, broken bones, burns, unclear skin changes, etc. without an explainable, comprehensible cause/ or frequent hospitalisation due to alleged accidents)

- Severe malnutrition
- Retardation in cognitive and motor skills without adequate support
- Poor personal hygiene (dirt and/or remains of excrements on the skin, inflamed skin surface, rotting teeth, vermin infestation, inadequate clothing, etc.)

#### **Behaviour of the child/adolescent**

- Complete lack of distance and/or high aggressiveness
- Self-endangering and other-endangering behaviour
- Statements made by the child that indicate maltreatment, abuse and neglect
- Child/ adolescent appears dazed/ intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, alcohol or medication
- Child/adolescent appears apathetic or very frightened, emotionally unstable
- Physical or mental development clearly inappropriate for their age

- Jactations (rocking movements)
- Frequent absences from school/ truancy/ problems with work and learning behaviour
- Social withdrawal or other abnormalities in social behaviour
- Frequent offences or criminal offences
- Repeated highly sexualised behaviour
- Repeated serious violence against other persons
- Spending time in places at risk for minors or repeatedly spending time in public at inappropriate ages

#### **Appearance of the carers**

- Ansprechbarkeit Lack of or difficult responsiveness
- Overexcitement, confusion
- Frequent drowsiness

#### **Behaviour of the educators**

- Frequent or massive hitting, shaking or confinement
- Frequent or massive verbal abuse, threats or derogatory treatment
- Isolation of the child
- Significant lack of care and supervision, lack of address
- Repeated or serious violence between the carers

#### **Family situation/ housing situation**

- Situations of excessive demands on the family and existential emergencies (e.g. due to particular changes in the family structure, sudden unemployment, debt...)
- pronounced attachment disorders
- Addiction problems
- Homelessness or extremely small or unhealthy accommodation
- Lack of basic family organisation (e.g. food shopping, waste disposal)
- Home is littered, dirty, mouldy or shows signs of external violence (e.g. severely damaged doors)
- Failure to remove significant hazards in the household such as defective power cables, open sockets, spillages lying around
- Obviously insufficient living space
- Inappropriate sleeping situation
- Lack of or defective heating, lack of electricity, no running water
- Lack of any play material

## Traffic light system

In order to make it clear to children which adult behaviour is not acceptable, we work with a traffic light system that provides information about inappropriate behaviour. Similarly, the traffic light system is pertinent with regard to behaviour by other children in the facility. The meaning of the traffic lights and the possibilities for complaints are worked out together with the children in our day-care centres and are discussed and updated annually.

### Green traffic light

This behaviour is pedagogically correct, but children do not always like it. Children have the right to receive explanations and express their opinions.

- Talking about children in the sense of pedagogical exchange
- Scolding
- Ask children to tidy up
- Making arrangements with parents and informing the children about them
- Determine to adhere to rules
- Forbidding to harm others
- Removal when others have been harmed
- Pass on information to the responsible youth welfare office/parents if the child is in danger

### Yellow traffic lights

This behaviour is pedagogically critical and hinders children's development. Children have a right to defend themselves and demand clarification:

- Don't let them finish
- Telling things that a child does not want
- Looking at a child's private things without permission
- Shouting
- Not honouring arrangements
- Excluding someone you don't like
- Thinking you are better
- Lying
- Crack up
- Change rules without reason
- Wishing for evil
- Becoming impertinent
- Carry on when a child says "stop"
- Taking out anger on children
- Being unreliable
- Being irresponsible
- Not setting rules
- Bossing around
- Talking badly about parents, family
- Ignoring children's needs
- Laughing at them, embarrassing them
- Putting children through something you know they can't do
- Making them afraid

### Red traffic light

This behaviour is always wrong and professionals can be reported and punished for it. Children have a right to protection and safety.

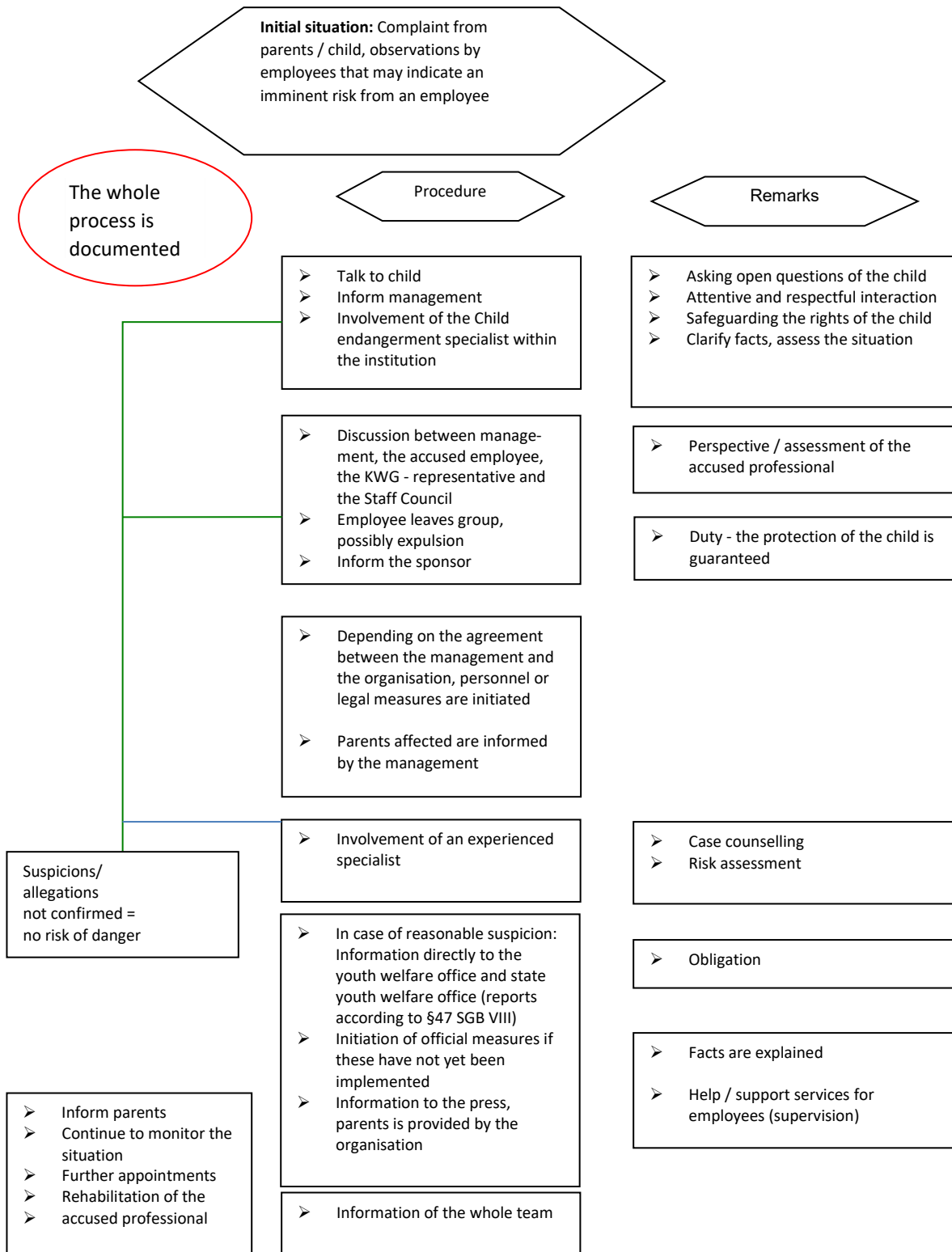
- Hitting, hurting, injuring
- Locking up
- Tying up

- Touching private parts
- Scaring and threatening
- Torturing for fun
- Should/must touch adults in the genital area
- Clawing
- Use violence

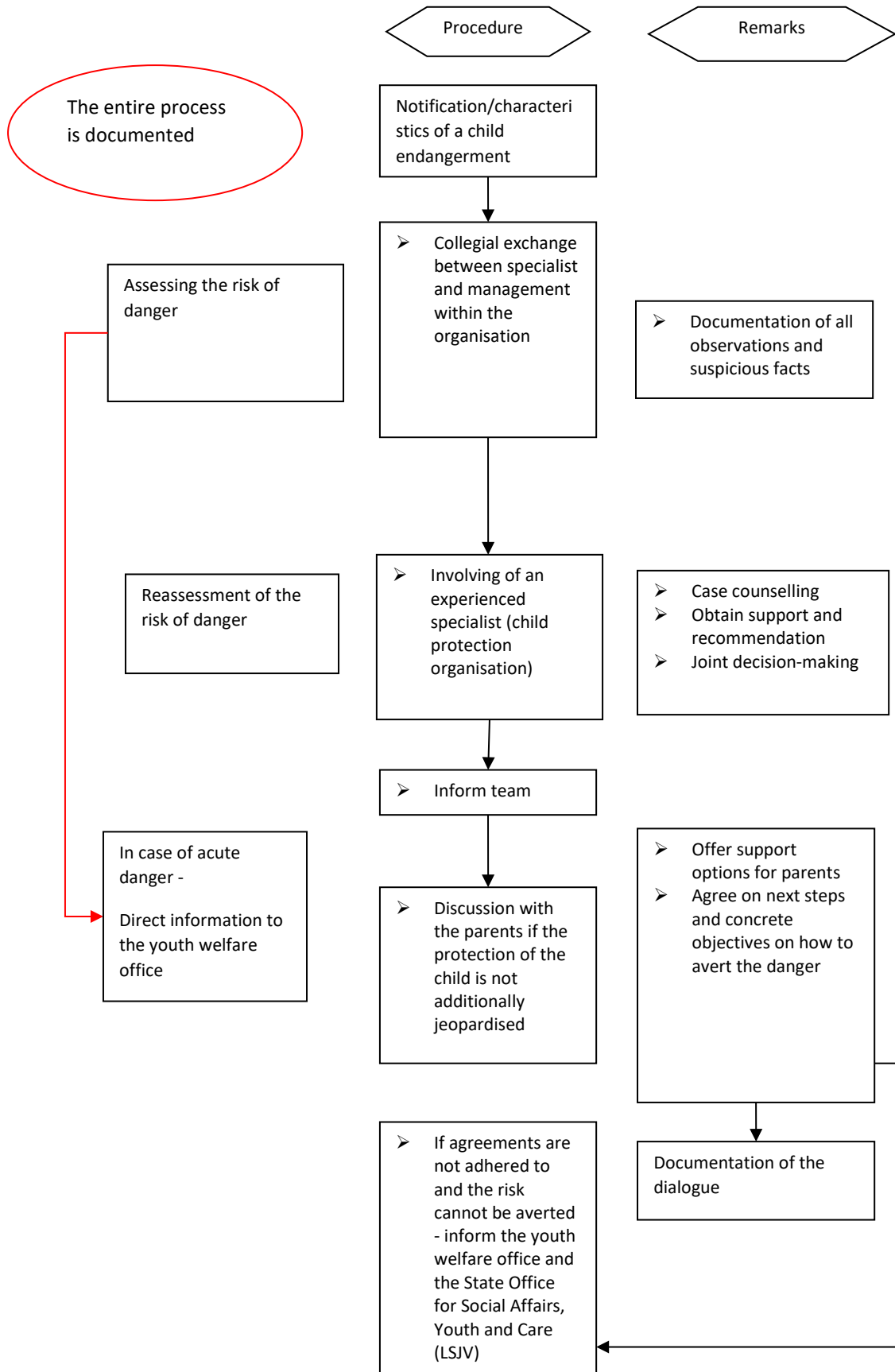
## Action steps in the event of child endangerment

The following guidelines show how to proceed systematically in the event of suspected child endangerment. We differentiate between incidents inside the centre (by specialist staff, interns, temporary staff, children, etc.) and outside the centre (by family members, friends, acquaintances, etc.).

### Process flow for INTERNAL hazards



### Process flow for external hazards





## **Facility-related supplements**

The following sections describe additions that require special attention in relation to the organisation.

### Drop-off and pick-up situation

Due to the location of the day-care centre in the fort, traffic is concentrated at the upper point of the day-care centre. Special care must be taken to ensure that the garden door and the main entrance door (for children) are locked to prevent accidents between children and vehicles.

### Leaving the premises

The parking situation is very confusing. There are also only a few parking spaces available. Caution is required when children and staff leave the day-care centre premises (excursions, onward visits, gymnasium). Specialists must take particular care to ensure that the children walk down the right-hand side of the car park as a group. The group must also use this side on the way back, as there is a cycle path opposite.

### Garden door of the groups

If the children are in the garden, these garden doors are usually open. Care must be taken to ensure that the doors are completely open to avoid accidents with vehicles.