



Child Protection Policy

Femmes for Freedom

Code of Conduct, March 2022

Introduction

Femmes for Freedom (FFF) is a Dutch women's rights organisation. We advocate for the freedom, equality and emancipation of bicultural girls and women in the Netherlands and abroad. Our primary goal is the full realisation of the CEDAW Convention, with a specific focus on article 16: the protection of women's rights and equality before, during and after marriage. We are committed to ensuring marital, sexual and financial freedom, breaking harmful stereotypes and combatting violence against bicultural women.

Femmes for Freedom is a grassroots organisation. We work closely with the girls and women we represent in order to achieve societal and political change. Together we develop education, lobby for sustainable political change and argue for improvements in social aid. Our efforts affect children, with an emphasis on girls, in our work regarding female genital mutilation, forced abandonment, free choice of partner and sexual education.

This Child Protection Policy outlines Femmes for Freedom's commitment to protecting children, and girls specifically, from harm. This document sets out guidelines for our activities and collaborations involving children in order to protect them and prevent harm. The policy adheres to internationally recognised standards set up by international children's rights instruments and the Keeping Children Safe Coalition. Femmes for Freedom actively communicates the Child Protection Policy to its employees, interns, volunteers and other partners in order to ensure compliance. The code of conduct is signed by employees, interns and volunteers who take part in activities or other collaborations with children.

Guiding principles

The goals of this Child Protection Policy are to:

- **protect and safeguard** children, and girls specifically, from any harm throughout our work;
- **reiterate the importance and our commitment** to guarantee the safety of children throughout our work;
- **set out clear guidelines** to all those associated with Femmes for Freedom regarding our position on child protection and safety in our work;
- **guarantee the best interest of the child** during our work, either in a group- or personal setting;
- **provide a safe and free environment** for children who take part in Femmes for Freedom's activities;
- **ensure equal respect** for all children, with no room for discrimination on any grounds.

Definitions

- **Child** - every person below the age of eighteen years.
- **Girl**- every person below the age of eighteen years who self-identifies as a girl.
- **Child abuse and neglect** - sometimes also referred to as child maltreatment, is defined as all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Within the broad definition of child maltreatment, five subtypes are distinguished - these are physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and negligent treatment, emotional abuse and exploitation.¹
- **Best interest of the child** - as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 3, "in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration". This is done by evaluating and balancing "all the elements necessary to make a decision in a specific situation for a specific individual child or group of children".²
- **Child safeguarding** - the responsibility of organisations who work with children to make sure their staff, volunteers and other partners do not harm children. This entails the adoption of internal policies and procedures to protect children from harm, and to report to the appropriate entities when there are concerns about children's safety within the communities they work.
- **Child protection** - part of safeguarding; the activities undertaken to protect children who are (at risk of) being abused.
- **Representatives:** the employees, interns and volunteers who work for or take part in activities in which Femmes for Freedom is involved.

Involvement with children

Femmes for Freedom's efforts may concern and involve children in the following manners:

- Involvement of children in focus groups about issues concerning them;
- Educating children on their rights;
- Advise and help a child when they contact us.

¹ [World Health Organization, Violence against children](#)

² [UNICEF. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Measures to ensure child protection

Code of conduct

All Femmes for Freedom representatives who work with children must sign the code of conduct. By signing this document, they are obliged to put the child's best interest first at all times. Moreover, it reiterates Femmes for Freedom's commitment to safeguarding children to the employees, interns and volunteers.

The director and responsible project manager are obligated to share the code of conduct with representatives who are in contact with children during their work at Femmes for Freedom.

Data protection and communication standards

Femmes for Freedom has a privacy policy. Personal data is not handed over to third parties in any case, including data of children.

Our educational material is, in some cases, aimed at children. When this is the case, such material is always developed in collaboration with communication experts with experience in education for children. When our materials are advertised on social media, targeting guidelines for children are always taken into account.

Confidentiality and privacy

In our work, children may discuss personal matters. We always act in the child's best interest when handling such personal matters. This includes keeping the information private from (potential) perpetrators, even when the perpetrators are family members. When concerns arise over the personal matters discussed, we will always do our best to help the child and report concerns to the appropriate authorities when needed.

Accountability

Any concerns regarding the safety and protection of a child during our work must be communicated with the director or responsible project manager. Femmes for Freedom will take appropriate action to investigate the allegation and/or report it to the appropriate authorities.

Code of Conduct

By signing this code of conduct, I agree to comply with Femmes for Freedom's child protection policy. I will always take the child's best interest into account, will not deliberately harm children and will report any inappropriate behaviour to the director or project manager.

During my work at Femmes for Freedom, I will:

- contribute to creating a safe, nurturing and empowering environment for children;
- take children's beliefs and concerns seriously and foster their personal development;
- treat all children with respect, regardless of their identity and background;
- respect children's dignity and privacy when taking photographs or filming;
- make other representatives aware of this code of conduct when necessary;
- safeguard children's privacy as much as possible, especially from (potential) perpetrators;
- report any concerns of breaches of this code of conduct, in its full extension, to Femmes for Freedom's director or project manager in a timely manner.

During my work at Femmes for Freedom, I will not:

- overstep the boundaries of my job description with or for the child without consulting the director or project manager;
- abuse my position to negatively influence the life and well-being of a child;
- physically abuse a child, in any case and matter;
- mentally abuse a child, in any case and matter;
- sexually exploit or abuse a child;
- humiliate or show other aggressive behaviour towards a child;
- touch a child in a (culturally) inappropriate or non-consensual manner;
- discriminate against a child for their beliefs, religion, ethnicity, gender, income, family, sexuality, or any other reason;
- develop an inappropriate relationship with a child that crosses the boundaries of my work;
- favour a child over other children when in a group setting;
- tolerate or facilitate abusive, inappropriate or discriminatory behavior towards a child;

I am aware that any breaches of this code of conduct will be dealt with in accordance with relevant policies and laws in fairness and justice.

Signature Femmes for Freedom representative