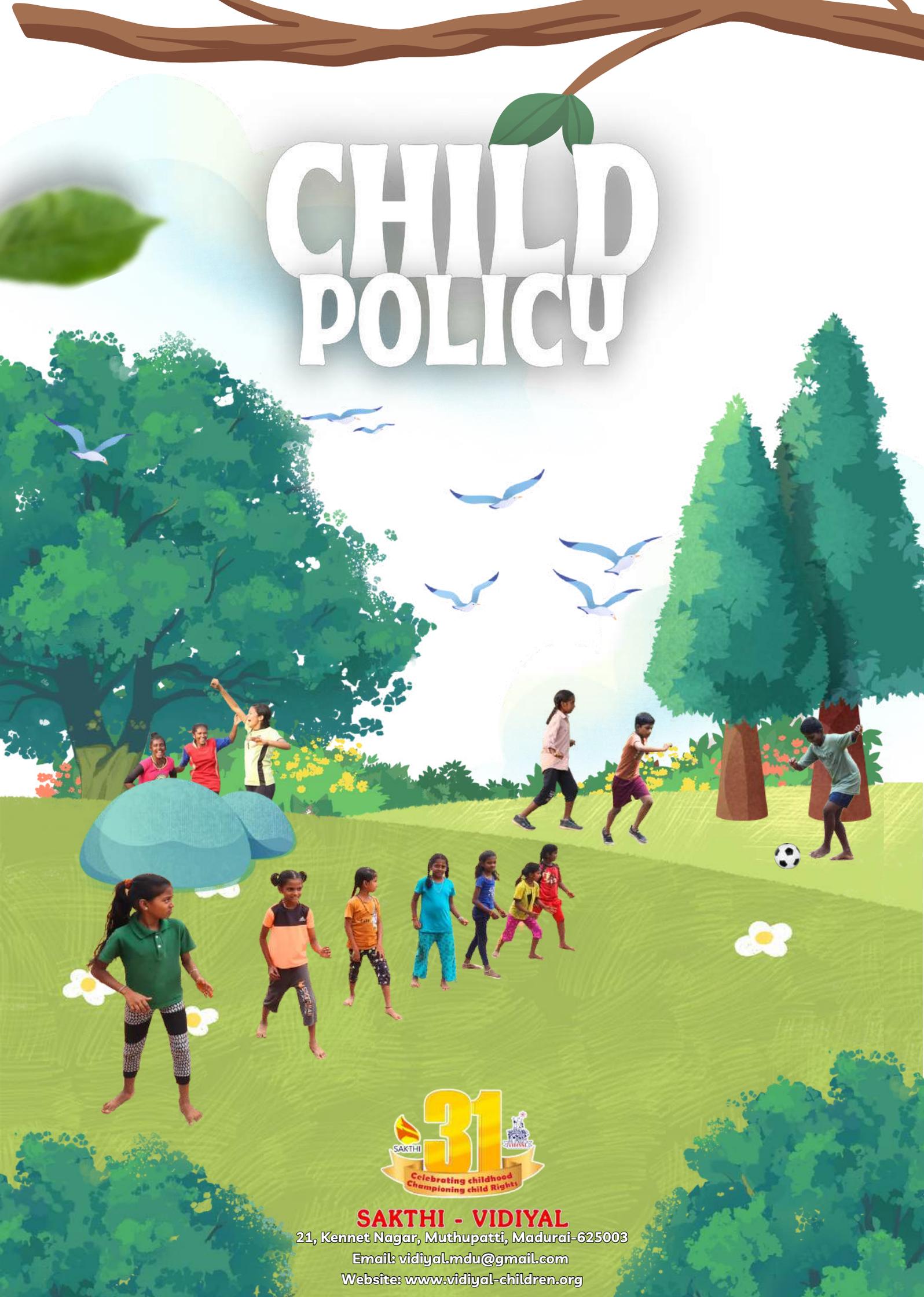


CHILD POLICY



SAKTHI - VIDİYAL

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Sakthi-Vidiyal's Child Policy

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About Us

Sakthi is a Voluntary Organization founded in 1993 in the city of Madurai a city steeped in religious traditions with its famed Meenakshi Temple. Sakthi is registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act S.No. 50 of 1993. The motto of Sakthi is to work with socially excluded communities, especially Women and Children.

Vidiyal, a programme of Sakthi, was initiated in 1996 and is an active advocate of Child Rights. It is an accepted and well-recognized resource agency for child and community development programs. Vidiyal works in eight localities with socio-economically disadvantaged communities living in appalling conditions. Vidiyal has established and runs Child Resource Centres in each locality.

The Vidiyal Child Rights Movement, a child-led organization, was initiated in the year 2000 to enable child participation and decision-making in child-related matters.

Since 2004, the Reception Home under the Juvenile Justice system for Madurai District has been under the auspices of Sakthi-Vidiyal, which houses runaway, abused, exploited, and abandoned children. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—such as No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-Being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and Partnerships for the Goals are integral to Sakthi-Vidiyal's programmes.

Preface

"Childhood is entitled to special care and assistance, convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that the child can fully assume his or her responsibilities within the community, recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity."- The Preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children are easy targets for exploitation because they are dependent on adults and social institutions for their development. They are unaware of their rights and unable to voice their concerns formally. Millions of young persons around the world are exploited in different ways. Children are forced to work in factories, in backrooms, on the street, and in the sex trade. They are sold as slaves and drafted to fight in wars. The violation of children's rights is pervasive throughout countries and fuels struggling economies. Exploitation of children is not restricted to the public sphere. Children are too often the recipients of violence in their own homes, where a high percentage of abuse-sexual, physical, emotional, and psychological takes place. Conditions of constant conflict or poverty inevitably propagate societal ills.

Vidiyal works with street and economically disadvantaged children and was established in 1996 as a program of Sakthi. Sakthi-Vidiyal, over the last 20 years, has initiated the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement and has established 22 Child Education Centres in socially and economically disadvantaged areas in Madurai. Vidiyal abides by the standards set by the Juvenile Justice Act and works with the Juvenile Justice System and Reception Home. It maintains a Children's Home for children coming from abusive and broken families through judicial custody and stands in lieu as the children's guardians. Vidiyal works with Childline as an outreach arm of its community program. The programs at Sakthi-Vidiyal promote child rights, provide resources for child-related issues, and hold forums for children to think, implement activities, and participate in children's networks.

Acknowledgement

Our Heartfelt Gratitude to

The Vidiyal Community who has made the completion of this Child Policy possible.

Our Vidiyal Child Rights Movement Leadership who, with their enthusiastic participation, extended their vital support and synergized the process.

Our Volunteer Team—Muhangal and Alumni—Olirum Muhangal for their critical understanding of child rights that stretched our thinking and challenged us to set benchmarks. Their participation strengthened our commitment and provided our motivation.

Our Staff Team for their persistent work and willingness to abide by established best practices and to look forward with commitment to new standards in child rights practice.

Our thanks extend to individuals and organizations that have played a key role in deepening our insights.

Our sincere appreciation is extended to the Sakthi Board for their unwavering support.

Our sincere thanks to our partners, NewDawn India - United Kingdom. Their mindfulness and perspective in working with children have added value to the Policy.

Our appreciation to Dr. Sujatha Rita, who facilitated and worked with us to initiate and complete the process of upgrading our Child Policy.

The Child Policy is a

Statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children at SAKTHI - VIDIYAL. Vidiyal sees itself as being responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from and working with the organization act prudently and take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that the welfare of children remains paramount.

Sakthi – Vidiyal recognizes its legal duty that all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, or beliefs. Children are an especially vulnerable group and therefore Vidiyal stress the importance of having safeguards for their protection.

Sakthi - Vidiyal provides children with an environment that supports Child Rights by the provision of information and knowledge critical for personal growth, enabling children to participate in activities and develop decision-making capacities, be aware of their safety, and the milieu to partake in fun and the learning activities of childhood. Emphasis is given on education, health, play, and recreation.



Our Vision

Every Right for Every Child

Our Mission

Empowering Children through Rights Based Approach

Core Belief

We Believe in Children being the Present and Part of Building a Peaceful and Just Society.



OUR VALUES

- **Every child is accepted.**
- **Every child is entitled to dignity and respect.**
- **Every child is unique and has the innate capacity to achieve their potential.**
- **Participation of the child is central to every sphere of the organization.**
- **Discipline and Boundaries are essential to build a child's character.**
- **The family is the basic unit to provide care and security to every child.**



OBJECTIVES

- **To create a congenial environment for the integrated and holistic development of children**
- **To restore childhood to all children**
- **To ensure care and protection of street connected children**
- **To provide basic needs to children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.**
- **To ensure development of socially excluded children by prioritizing their Rights**
- **To teach life skills and values**
- **To encourage children to celebrate our diversified culture**
- **To ensure opportunities for education and vocational training**
- **To ensure Child Rights in society by providing child rights education to all stakeholders**
- **To work with various child related social structures including the family, community and school and ensure protection of children from abuse, exploitation and discrimination**
- **To ensure children's right to participation and enable children to build their own movement for their voice to be heard in various platforms**
- **To plan along with the children and ensure their participation in all decisions in relation to their rights**
- **To facilitate children becoming agents of social change**
- **To network with likeminded organizations to address various issues affecting children**
- **To lobby and advocate with the government to bring favorable changes in child related policies**





STRUCTURE



- ☀ The Board of Sakthi comprises of child development professionals, social workers, psychologists, educationists, former Vidiyal Children and eminent citizens. The board is the policy making body and is responsible for financial management.
- ☀ The core staff team comprises of the Executive Director, Director – Child Development, Director – Child Protection, Director – Child Participation, Director – School Education and Digital Media, Digital Media Trainer, Head Volunteer, Superintendent, Academic Trainer, Project Coordinator, Child Welfare Officer, Field Coordinator, Cluster Coordinators, Counsellors and Street Educators who engage in a participatory decision-making process with regard to the implementation, monitoring and concurrent review of the programmes and projects.
- ☀ Children participate in the working of the organization with representation in the board and in committees working for the welfare of the child.
- ☀ The Executive Director is responsible for designing, implementing and directing projects and programmes in consultation with the board. The Executive Director is accountable for Financial and Personnel management.
- ☀ The Executive Director implements child rights, monitors and evaluates periodically the Child Policy and works with strategies and systems, that promote the development, participation and decision-making capabilities of children. Sets guidelines for the conduct of staff, trainers, caregivers, volunteers, interns and others are provided and commitment ensured during their time.
- ☀ The Executive Director implements programmes for child rights, through the Directors – Child Development, Child Protection, Child Participation and School Education and Digital Media who are assisted by Project, and Field Coordinators, Support Staff, and Volunteers.



STRUCTURE



- ☀ The Directors – Child Development, Child Protection, Child Participation and School Education and Digital Media implement, monitor and evaluate the programmes for child provision, child development, child protection and child participation.
- ☀ Administration and financial management staff report to the Executive Director.
- ☀ The Academic Trainer, Student Counsellor, Project Coordinator and the Cluster Coordinators are responsible for the effective and efficient management of the Child Education Centres and work directly with the communities.
- ☀ Street Educators, Animators and Volunteers work directly with children at the Child Education Centres.
- ☀ The Superintendent, Child Welfare Officer, Counsellor and the support staff of the Children’s Home are directly responsible for ensuring the safety and care of children living in the children’s home.
- ☀ The Volunteers Forum called ‘Muhangal’ meaning ‘Faces’ anchor Vidiyal’s Child Education Centres. The children transition into youth and join as volunteers and are nurtured through a yearlong internship programme and then with periodical capacity building training programmes. They provide leadership, care and protection to the younger children.
- ☀ The ‘Olirum Muhangal’ meaning ‘Radiant Faces’ are the Alumni of Vidiyal who engage themselves in participating in Vidiyal activities and share their resources and expertise.



STRATEGY

- ☀️ Affirmative action and a positive bias for equity are the essence of all our programs.
- ☀️ We respect and ensure child participation in matters concerning children.
- ☀️ We promote and implement child rights through our projects and programmes with the children and in the family, community, schools and in society.
- ☀️ We support children's growth and development including their participation and decision making in child related matters.
- ☀️ We collaborate with other organizations to promote education, skill training and child related advocacy initiative.
- ☀️ We establish appropriate mechanisms and programmes for the protection of children in the organization, family, community and schools.
- ☀️ We participate in the implementation of Juvenile Justice System and access the existing government structures for the protection of children.
- ☀️ We create opportunities for children to come together to form their collective.
- ☀️ We facilitate the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement thereby establishing a Child Led Organization.
- ☀️ We work with children to build and access children's federations and establish linkages with local, state, national and international child forums.
- ☀️ We work with our alumni Olirum Muhangal and other Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to integrate child rights in communities and the society.
- ☀️ We initiate and work with coalitions to advocate for child rights.
- ☀️ We utilize Right to Information Act to ensure Child Rights.
- ☀️ We monitor implementation of laws that foster social inclusion and condemn discrimination and prejudice.

SYSTEM

*Children enjoy privileges
and priority in every
sphere of the
Organization*



3.1 RIGHT TO LIFE

3.1.1 AGE

- ✿ Every person below the age of eighteen is a child.
Children coming to Vidiyal are divided into five age groups
- ✿ Beginner 5 years – 7 years; Primary 8 years – 9 years; Junior 10 years – 11 years; Intermediate 12 years – 13 years and Senior 14 years – 17 years.
- ✿ Age appropriate training methodologies are adapted to impart knowledge and skills.



3.1.2 IDENTITY

- ✿ Parents are facilitated to register their children's birth and obtain the children's birth certificate to ensure access to social security and social welfare benefits of the Government.
- ✿ The profile of every child in the Organization is maintained confidentially together with health and psychosocial care records.



3.1.3 SHELTER HOME

- ✿ The shelter home is an undertaking under the aegis of Juvenile Justice and the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act are implemented.
- ✿ The details of children admitted for judicial custody are uploaded in the designated online portal prescribed by the government.



3.1.4 FOOD

- ✿ A nutritionist is consulted for the provision of nutritious, timely and sufficient food. Seasonal vegetables and fruits are provided. Three main meals and snacks are provided at the Shelter Home.
- ✿ Supplementary food is provided to children attending the Child Education Centres as necessary.
- ✿ Quality and taste of the food is ensured by the Directors - Child Development, Child Protection and Child Participation and implemented by the staff in charge.
- ✿ The staff, volunteers and children are provided with the same standard of food in all programmes.



3.1.5 WATER

- ✿ Standards for water storage facilities especially drinking water are maintained.
- ✿ Adequate potable water is provided at all Child Education Centres and at the Shelter home



3.1.6 CLOTHING

- ✿ All Children are provided with sufficient clothing.
- ✿ Children living in the community and who are covered under the sponsorship programme are given yearly two sets of school uniform. Clothes for special occasions are purchased by the children in selected shops.
- ✿ The quality of donated used clothes is checked before need based distribution.



3.1.7 HEALTH

- ✿ Parents are educated to access government health care services for minor health issues.
- ✿ Major health care needs are attended to with priority. Contact with a range of specialists and paediatricians are established and emergency medical aid is ensured in hospitals.
- ✿ Health awareness programmes are held for children to enable them to be protected from seasonal health hazards.
- ✿ Height and weight of the children are checked at quarterly intervals.
- ✿ All staff and volunteers undertake training on First Aid.
- ✿ A first aid box is maintained and periodically stocked / replenished at each Child Education Centre and Shelter Home.
- ✿ Counselling services are provided for children.
- ✿ Psycho social care is ensured through mentorship and periodical family interaction programmes.

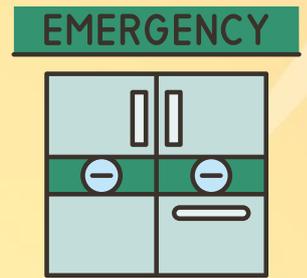


3.1.8 ACCIDENTS / MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

- ✿ All Staff and Volunteers should have the contact phone numbers of the Executive Director, Director - Child Development, Child Protection, and Child Participation and will contact them in each emergency.
- ✿ First aid will be provided at the Child Education Centers as needed. All other injuries / accidents encountered at Vidiyal will be referred to the nearest government hospital. Parent and the Executive Director will be informed.
- ✿ Children meeting with an accident during trips, outings and travel will be transported by the government ambulance service to the nearest government hospital escorted by the staff / volunteer. The Director - Child Development, Child Protection, Child Participation, Executive Director and Parents /guardian are informed.
- ✿ If the accident involves several children, the staff member / volunteer will contact the Government ambulance service and escort the children to the government hospital for emergency treatment and services. The Executive Director will be informed about the nature of accident and the names of the injured children and the office will contact parents /guardians.
- ✿ Accidents occurring due to fire, flood and other unforeseen circumstances will be dealt by contacting the respective agencies – fire service, disaster management center and related services. The Executive Director will follow up and oversee the rescue and relief endeavours.



- ✿ In the event of staff / volunteers being involved in an accident with the children – Government ambulance service will be contacted and the Director – Child Development, Child Protection, and Child Participation will be informed and the office will contact the family.



- ✿ All staff / volunteers have knowledge and training in handling child specific issues including managing epilepsy.

- ✿ Sudden onset of illness in a child will be handled by staff / volunteer with first aid, and if necessary, call for the Government ambulance service for transport to the government hospital. The information is conveyed to Director - Child Development, Child Protection and Child Participation and through them to the Executive Director, parent/guardian. A detailed reporting of the incident will be noted in the child's health record.



- ✿ In the case of death of a child at any of the centers, the Executive Director will be informed. The Executive Director will contact the parent / guardian and the police. In the case of death of a child at the shelter home the Executive Director will be informed and the reporting protocol under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 will be followed.
- ✿ A Record will be maintained about any accident, illness and death that have occurred in the premises or during a programme.

3.1.9 ENVIRONMENT

- ✿ A clean environment is maintained in the Shelter Home and in all Child Education Centres.
- ✿ All our campuses and premises are tobacco, drug and alcohol free.
- ✿ The staff and volunteers demonstrate and participate in maintaining clean surroundings in the premises and during programmes.
- ✿ The children's forums are responsible for the cleanliness of the Child Education Centres and the Shelter Home.
- ✿ Children are encouraged to follow civic responsibilities.



3.1.10 MEETING WITH PARENTS / GUARDIANS

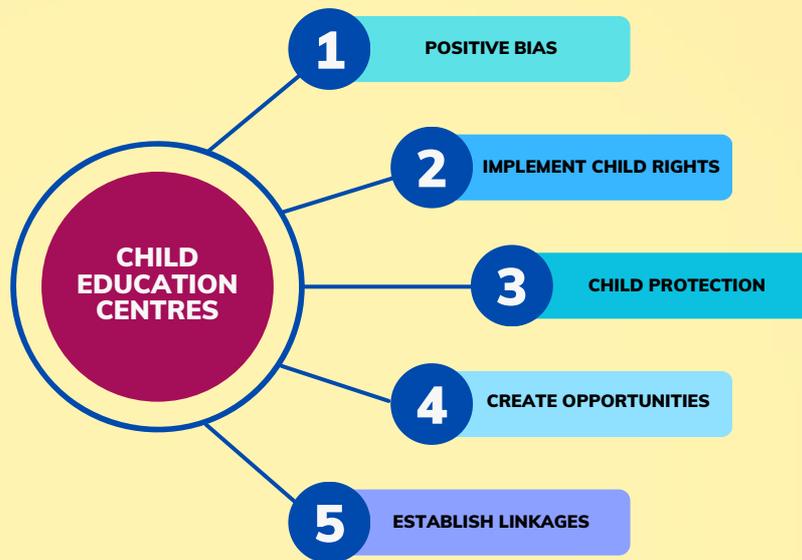
- ✿ Monthly and bi-monthly awareness programmes and parenting sessions are held for the mothers, fathers, and guardians of children attending the Child Education Centres to facilitate and ensure child - parent interaction and relationship.
- ✿ To enable the Parents to become active defenders of the rights of their children / wards, we choose topics that impart knowledge on child rights, child protection and child psychology.



3.2 RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

3.2.1 CHILD EDUCATION CENTRES

- ❖ The Child Education Centres function between 5 pm and 8 pm on all days except Sundays. The Main Centre works through the year between 9.30 am and 8.30 pm.
- ❖ The main centre is a multi-faceted resource centre with creative programmes. It is a planning and meeting centre and events are held aimed at the integrated, holistic development of all children.



3.2.2 EDUCATION

- ❖ Children attending the Child Education Centres are encouraged and helped to complete their homework. Additionally, assistance is provided for subjects that children find difficult. Volunteers / staff are placed in each centre to support children in their education.
- ❖ Children are motivated to complete schooling and pursue college or vocational education based on their aptitude and interest.
- ❖ Street Educators / Cluster Coordinators routinely visit the homes of children to monitor and sustain parental and child interest in school attendance. Absenteeism in children is decreased through family interaction.

VIDIYAL



✦ Appropriate alternate opportunities for education and vocational education are provided for children with learning difficulties and children with inadequate foundation at the primary education level.



✦ Children with special needs are admitted in educational institutions which has facilities for their integrated holistic development.

✦ Children who show interest in academic development are provided with opportunities for higher education and are supported with internships and job placements.



✦ Open house is held once a year to facilitate interaction with family members of the child and staff.

✦ Career guidance is held yearly to disseminate information and ensure career choice.

✦ Weekly sessions are organised in each Child Education Centre to impart Child Rights Education to all children through creative means.



✦ Every child coming to Vidiyal will get opportunity to participate in quarterly trainings. Between 5 years and 17 years, age appropriate trainings/workshops are organized to capacitate children.

✦ Children are imparted with information and knowledge on Financial Management which include, the value of money, its usage, and the value of small savings.

✦ Every child coming to Vidiyal will be given opportunity to become computer literate through basic computer education at the main centre and Shelter Home.



✦ Children who have the aptitude for technical skills will be provided with advance level of training. Access to internet is supported with safeguards.

- ❖ All adolescent children participate in group sessions on Vidiyal’s “Sexual Health Intervention Programme (SHIP)”. Their right to reproductive health care is explained with appropriate information on sex and sexuality.
- ❖ Adolescent children are enabled to work through their age-related development stage and move towards adulthood.
- ❖ Life skills programmes are held during adolescence together with basic human and civil rights that is inclusive of legal rights pertaining to daily life.
- ❖ Every year the Girl Child Day is celebrated through a series of creative programmes.
- ❖ Every year boys are nurtured on values of gender equality through programmes on ‘Champions for Change’ – Boys Standing for Gender Equality.

3.2.3 DIGITAL MEDIA

- ❖ Children are supported to learn, explore and develop their skills and knowledge about digital technologies.
- ❖ Children are supervised in their learning and provided with opportunities to experiment and improve their digital creativity.
- ❖ Age-appropriate digital literacy and safety standards are maintained.
- ❖ Open communication and guidelines about media literacy are supported.
- ❖ Artificial Intelligence learning is used.



3.2.4 VIDIYAL TRAINING CENTRE

- ❖ All trainings and workshops for children, staff, volunteers, interns and other child related services are held in this centre.
- ❖ The centre is provided with the necessary facilities and equipments.
- ❖ The centre is equipped with security cameras to protect and ensure safe participation.
- ❖ Staff members with expertise are provided with opportunities to facilitate trainings and workshops for other organizations and networks.



3.2.5 VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- ❖ Children who have the aptitude for technical training are given opportunities to join in courses offered by CSO's, ITI's, Government Polytechnic Colleges and Community Colleges.



3.2.6 LEISURE, PLAY AND CULTURE

- ❖ Psycho motor activities are conducted in all Child Education Centers and in the Shelter Home.
- ❖ Opportunities are created for sports and games in the Main centre, Vidiyal Learning Center and in the Shelter Home.
- ❖ Children are provided opportunities to learn and play indoor game at all Child Education Centres and in the Shelter Home.
- ❖ Quarterly trainings are organised in indoor and outdoor games.
- ❖ Weekend play activities are organised in all Child Education Centres.
- ❖ Information regarding sport and game events is provided and children are encouraged to participate in competitions conducted by various associations.
- ❖ Annual sports meet is organised during Pongal season to promote cultural and sport activities.
- ❖ Children are encouraged to join forums on Science, Sports, Theatre, Art, Literature, Journalism, Social Action and Martial Arts which provide opportunities for sensory development and physical, social, psychological and intellectual development. These forums are headed by children and facilitated by Volunteers and Staff.
- ❖ Theme based experiential activities are developed based on current trends, interests, and identified needs.
- ❖ A children's bus library is maintained and children are encouraged to read books. Interested children form a library management team to facilitate easy access to and procurement of children's books. Volunteers are in charge of weekly reading sessions to encourage the reading habit and critical thinking in children.



❖ Every month children of one Child Education Center visit the Bus Library and have fun filled reading sessions.

❖ Children are motivated to learn traditional art forms and opportunities are provided through formal training programmes during school vacations.

❖ Children are facilitated to join the “Children’s Theatre” troupe. They are encouraged to perform in various arenas. Their interests and skills are sustained through ongoing trainings.

❖ In cultural performances, children are given opportunities to exhibit their skills and talents.

❖ During every quarter, picnics and exposure visits are organised for children, covering historical places, trade and factory settings, and places of environmental interest. The Sponsored Children with regular attendance are taken on a two-day excursion.

❖ A day camp titled “Jolly Camp” is organised during the summer vacation for 10 days. This camp serves as an induction programme for new children joining the Organization and a special renewal, commitment and fun for Vidiyal’s children.

❖ A residential camp is organised during quarterly holidays for children above 10 years having regular attendance to the Child Education Centers.

❖ Once in three years, an adventurous and challenging trekking programme is organised for the senior children to build self-confidence and to stretch their abilities.

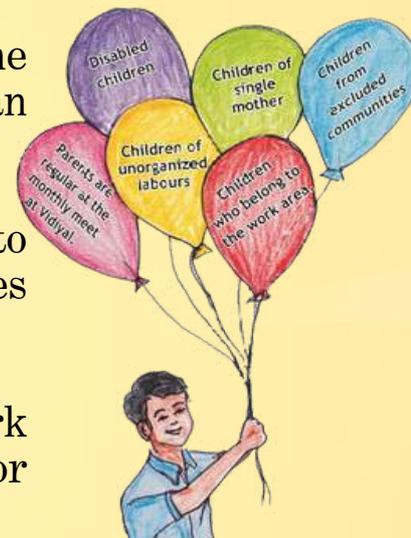
❖ Children are encouraged to develop their skills in swimming and cycling.



- ❖ Children who have special skills in drawing and painting, theatre, singing, folk art and martial art are enabled and encouraged to train children from other children's organizations.
- ❖ Periodical training is organised for the young facilitators of the children's movement and they are encouraged to facilitate sessions in Vidiyal Child Rights Movement and in other child networks.
- ❖ Children are facilitated to choose appropriate service projects to develop social behaviour, social conscience, and humanitarian values. Every quarter, children in the upper age groups visit homes for the aged, home for the blind and differently abled to render service. Every year children save, collect, contribute and raise funds to support a neighbourhood charity. Children are encouraged to participate in gardening.

3.2.7 SPONSORSHIP

- ❖ Sponsorship is given to children who are regular to the Child Education Centres established in urban communities.
- ❖ Children from excluded communities, belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, semi-nomadic tribes and minority communities are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Children, whose parents are engaged in scavenging work on a temporary or contract basis are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Children, whose parents are engaged in unorganized labour are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Children, whose parents are infected with terminal diseases are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Children of single mother or deserted mother are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Disabled children are eligible for sponsorship.
- ❖ Children who secure adequate stars in the token economy system are included for sponsorship.



3.3 RIGHT TO PROTECTION

3.3.1 SAFETY

- ✦ All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm and abuse.
- ✦ Child safety norms are developed for each situation and due consideration is given to the norms in every programme.
- ✦ Every staff, volunteer, intern, sponsors, donors are prescreened before direct contact with the children.
- ✦ Audit mechanisms are incorporated in our systems to verify and validate procedures and expected and stated behavior.
- ✦ Staff and volunteers always work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- ✦ Children are encouraged to contact recognized staff members at any time while encountering unexpected danger from a known or unknown person or persons.
- ✦ Staff members, while maintaining confidentiality about children's confidences, will share information about safety concerns, including whether children are being treated with respect.
- ✦ Different adult - child ratios are followed in all the projects and programmes. For older children above the age of 10 years - a ratio of 1: 20 and for younger children below the age of 10 years - a ratio of 1:10 is followed. In the Shelter Home for the care of children with special needs and during emergencies and health issues the ratio is 1:1.
- ✦ At the time of probation, the probationer is not allowed to take children independently for any programme. He or she is always monitored by a long-term staff and feedback is documented.

- + Designated staff members accompany children while attending residential programmes and network meetings. Protection during a network programme, travel and transit is collectively ensured by the staff team with assigned duties.
- + Strangers, donors, suppliers, service providers and vendors are prohibited from contacting or having any communication with children.
- + Children are prevented from entering into vulnerable situations and if such situations emerge unexpectedly children are removed immediately to a safe place.
- + Girl children are always accompanied by female staff / volunteer while attending programmes.
- + It is mandatory for the parents / guardians to sign the consent form while taking the child for residential programmes and network meetings.
- + Parents, staff and volunteers are responsible to escort children to their homes after 10.00 PM.
- + The general public and visitors are not permitted to take photographs of children at the centre and in public spaces.
- + When children are taken into public places staff members / volunteers are designated to provide vigilance and ensure any unwanted encounters with the public.
- + Staff and volunteers are prohibited from downloading, storing and sharing of child inappropriate images via mobile phones and other electronic devices
- + Staff, Volunteers, interns and visitors are not permitted to allow children to access their personal mobile phones, iPod, laptops and other electronic devices.
- + Weapons, drugs, pesticides, chemicals and sharp objects are kept in secure and locked places where children have no access.

- ✦ Fire extinguishers are kept in the premises of the organization and regular fire drills are held for children and staff. Staff members are oriented in fire prevention measures.
- ✦ Children and staff are given training on disaster preparedness and disaster management.
- ✦ Counselling sessions are offered for children in need of psychological support.
- ✦ Through thematic camps children are nurtured with values of equality and equity.
- ✦ The concept “Caste is null and void” is upheld and encouraged in practice. Reconciliation events are held to promote peace and community co-existence.
- ✦ People interested in adopting a child are guided to access Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA).

3.3.2 ABUSE

- ✦ Abuse is never the choice of children and never their fault.
- ✦ Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- ✦ At the time of a reported child abuse or suspected abuse an enquiry is conducted with due consideration for the best interest of the child.
- ✦ When an abuse has occurred, the child is provided with psychosocial care and rehabilitation measures.
- ✦ Inappropriate behaviour and abusive relationship with children are subject to legal action and public exposure.



✦ Unsafe touching, grooming, using suggestive language, messaging, keeping personal meetings and secrets is banned with all children especially the girl child.

✦ Children of the same age and gender stay together in camps and other residential programmes.

✦ The Executive Director is the point person for funding partners, donors, government officials, interns, visitors, and persons representing other organizations for contact and assistance. He may depute a recognised staff for follow up and further action.

✦ The Director - Child Development, Director - Child Protection and Director - Child Participation are the point persons for local donors, community leaders, and school authorities for contact and assistance. They depute a recognised staff for follow up and further action.

✦ Staff, guests, visitors, interns, donors, sponsors, teachers, volunteers, resource persons and funding partners are not permitted to take any child for their personal programmes or for overnight stay in their personal or official capacity.

✦ Letters, phone calls and emails are screened before it reaches a child to avoid placing children in vulnerable situations.

✦ Letters from children to sponsors are screened by the Executive Director.

✦ The Executive Director receives and disburses gifts, cash awards, material supplies to children given by staff, guests, visitors, interns, donors, sponsors, resource persons, and volunteers. Direct contact with children is not allowed.

✦ The sponsored child and the sponsor remain in contact only through official channels.



- + Recognized staff members accompany donors and sponsors while visiting the projects and programmes.
- + Children's images are photographed or video graphed only with the prior permission from the Organization.
- + It is mandatory to obtain written consent from both the child and the parent for any photographing, video-graphing, and the use of those materials in our publications or productions.
- + Children's photographs are not identified with names in any of the publications / productions including the print and electronic media.
- + Children's images and stories are stored in safe custody of the organization and have restricted usage.
- + Children are consulted periodically in designing, reviewing and modifying the safety norms and procedures followed in the organization.
- + Staff are available to care for and protect children with special needs.

3.3.3 CHILDREN'S SEXUALITY

- + We support children in understanding their sexuality and guide them in channeling their energy in a positive and healthy way

3.3.4 SEXUAL ABUSE

- + Every child coming in contact with Vidiyal is provided with adequate knowledge on Child Protection mechanisms including Childline's toll free number 1098.
Safe boundaries in relating to people are demonstrated consistently and taught to children on a regular basis.

+ Staff and volunteers are trained to recognize processes pertaining to the grooming of children for sexual abuse and to observe children's behaviour, especially marked changes in behaviour and to ensure appropriate care and supervision.

+ Songs with obscene lyrics and karaoke version of such songs are not used in any of the programs

+ Every year age appropriate education is given to children on 'Protection from Sexual Abuse' by trained staff and volunteers.

+ Children, staff and volunteers are periodically educated about the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012 and reported abuse is dealt according to the law.

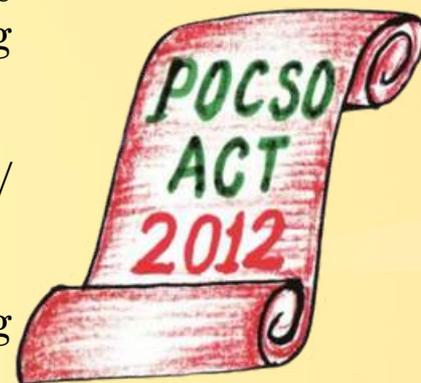
+ Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate / unsafe touching is prohibited under every circumstance.

+ Rough physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay are prohibited.

+ Allegations made by a child against another child or against a staff or volunteer is recorded, challenged and acted upon.

+ A reporting system is in place when

- A child is touched accidentally,
- He / She seems distressed in any manner,
- A child appears to be sexually aroused by one's actions and
- A child misunderstands or misinterprets something one has said or done.



- ✦ When sexual abuse is perceived as a possibility by the child, the child is taken into protective custody.
- ✦ The Executive Director is the point person for reporting any abuses or perceived threats of sexual abuse of children. Any complaint made to the Executive Director is recorded and acted upon with immediacy.
- ✦ Young sex offenders at the Shelter Home are reported in writing by the superintendent to the Child Welfare Committee. Young sex offenders at the Child Education Centre are referred to the appropriate services.
- ✦ Staff and volunteers are fully supported and protected when in good faith he/she reports his/her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.
- ✦ Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer is reported to the Executive Director, who takes the steps considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- ✦ Anyone working, in a paid or unpaid capacity, cannot decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. They have the responsibility to act on concerns through contact with the Executive Director.

3.3.5 CHILDREN ABUSING OTHER CHILDREN

- ✦ We acknowledge that children are capable of abusing other Children to assert their dominance and control over those who are vulnerable.
- ✦ We address children's insecurities that manifest through bullying, violence, verbal, physical and sexual abuse of other children
- ✦ We break through their trauma and abuse by developing alternative methods for relationship building and re parenting.



3.3.6 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

- ✦ Children are educated to recognise the usage of language, gestures, touch and physical postures that denote sexual connotations.
- ✦ Children are engaged in identifying and strengthening their asexual identity.
- ✦ Children are encouraged to develop personal boundaries and barriers against their own sexuality till they are confident of their expression.

3.3.7 INHUMAN TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

- ✦ Once a year, a training programme is organised for parents on the devastating impact of harmful traditional practices and superstitious beliefs.
- ✦ Rational outlook is developed in children through imparting contemporary knowledge in debunking myths.
- ✦ Parents are taught alternate disciplinary methods to nurture children.
- ✦ Participation in the traditional practices or rituals that affect children is forbidden.
- ✦ Children who approach the Organization for support when affected by traditional practices are protected through legal measures.



3.3.8 DRUG ABUSE / SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- + Guests, visitors, students, interns, donors, funding partners, resource persons, volunteers, parents and government officials are forbidden from using drugs, smoking and consuming alcohol in the premises and programmes of the organization.
- + Staff and volunteers are forbidden from using substances, tobacco products and alcohol.
- + Awareness and Prevention against the use and abuse of any substance that affects children's safety, health and that harm their growth.
- + Training is given on 'Prevention and Protection from Drug and Alcohol Abuse' to adolescent children. Children are supported to say 'No' when faced with peer and societal pressures.
- + Children addicted to drugs and alcohol and children affected by alcohol and drug abuse in the family are supported with referral services to appropriate organizations dealing with de addiction.
- + Counselling for children in substance abuse to provide structure, support, and intervention.
- + Parental awareness programmes are conducted on the impact of alcohol and drug abuse for developing healthy families.
- + Widespread usage of substance abuse in the community is challenged and parents especially fathers are held accountable for their abusive actions.



3.3.9 CHILD TRAFFICKING

- + Awareness programmes on trafficking related issues is used to combat and prevent child trafficking.
- + Joint initiatives are undertaken through Campaign against Child Trafficking (CACT).



3.3.10 CHILD MARRIAGE

- ✦ Ensure widespread awareness of the 'Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006'.
- ✦ The Community and Parents are sensitised about the Child Marriage Prohibition Act, 2006 and the legal marriage age through awareness programmes and media.
- ✦ Prevention of Child marriages are facilitated through Childline.
- ✦ Children are educated to access toll free number 1098 for help.
- ✦ Children are educated on the consequences of child marriage and enabled to postpone their marriage age.
- ✦ Awareness creation through sex education especially physiological consequences of early marriage, consanguinity marriages and prevalent adverse socio-cultural norms.
- ✦ Demystifying the cluster of social norms and attitudes that reflect the devaluation accorded to the human rights of girls.



3.3.11 DISCRIMINATION

- + Ridiculing children on any basis including caste, colour complexion, height, weight, ability, appearance, gender, area of living, parental occupations and cultural orientation is avoided in any performance or publication of the organization.
- + Children coming from difficult circumstances, disadvantaged backgrounds, Dalit children and girl children are given priority and reservation in all the projects and programmes of the organization.
- + The organization ensures positive bias and affirmative action for the girl child.
- + Caste is dealt as null and void obliterating the basis of shame and blame in children. Children's participation and decision making is strengthened to confront and challenge discriminatory practices.
- + Legal action is initiated against discriminatory practices in schools based on children's reports and evidence.
- + Vidiyal collaborates with media and other organizations for public participation in preventing and stopping discriminatory practices especially in schools.
- + Vidiyal collaborates with the village level child protection committee to ensure and promote equality and equity.



3.3.12 VIOLENCE

- ✦ Violence as a means to resolve issues is forbidden.
- ✦ In every programme, children are educated about alternate problem solving methods through demonstration and opportunities to practice.
- ✦ Corporal punishments are forbidden in the premises and programmes of the organization.
- ✦ Violence and emotional abuse are unacceptable.
- ✦ Staff and volunteers are encouraged and educated with alternate discipline methods to address behaviour issues of children.
- ✦ Parents are educated about discipline techniques and boundaries as part of child rearing.
- ✦ Movies are selected for age-appropriate viewing.
- ✦ Age-appropriate responsibilities are entrusted to children with consultation and discussion.
- ✦ Staff and volunteers are not allowed to use children to run errands and do personal work.
- ✦ Psychosocial protection is ensured through periodic debriefing especially after programmes, events and incidents that have initiated violence in the community or elsewhere.



3.3.13 CHILD LABOUR

- ✦ Education of the community and children that child labor can lead to slavery and sexual or economic exploitation and that it restricts their fundamental rights to schooling, health care and threatening their future.
- ✦ Educate and inform the general public, especially businesses, employers and communities on the ill effects of Child labour - extreme bodily and mental harm, and even death and about the laws and their penalties.
- ✦ We address the root causes which make children particularly vulnerable to child labour.
- ✦ Ensure the protection of the rights of children working in non-hazardous occupations as permitted by law
- ✦ Education of the community and enabling access to remunerative jobs.



3.3.14 ONLINE SAFETY

- ✦ Children are educated on online risks - sharing of personal information, display of personal information, responding to online social networks, how to conduct communication, social interactions, use safe search settings on browsers, apps, search engines and limit camera and video functions and engage in activities.
- ✦ Educate children on appropriate balance between online time and other activities and to encourage them to analyse internet content. Set boundaries for accessing content.
- ✦ Educate children on protection from pornography, child pornography, grooming, cyber bullying, online sexual exploitation / harassment, revenge porn, identity theft, phishing, hacking, financial fraud, online footprints in cyberspace, morphing, sexting, stalking, soliciting and sextortion.



3.3.15 PANDEMIC

Our Pandemic policy pays attention to prevent and mitigate exacerbated behavioural and mental health crisis among children

SURVIVAL

- + Inform children in child specific language regarding the pandemic's predicted impact, effects and consequences and the precautions to be followed. Ensure that children take precautions to prevent exposure to the prevalent infection.
- + All children will be informed about the prescribed and proscribed guidelines of the government and Health Department in age-appropriate language. The guidelines will include precautions to avoid infection, to ensure vaccination and necessary medication.
- + Child specific relief kits containing nutrients and minerals are provided.
- + Our focus will be on eliminating heightened anxiety regarding health and wellbeing; stress of disrupted routines; academic and social challenges associated with school closures; increased risk of family stress, domestic violence, mental illness and other social issues through our online meeting and our daily activities with children.
- + Address potential concerns, issues, problems and challenges relating to the said pandemic.
- + Encourage limited consumption of news to protect the mental health of children especially from fear and hopelessness.
- + Provision of Counselling, storytelling, stress prevention and management strategies, promotion of mental wellness programmes and need based individual and group supportive care to ensure the avoidance of catastrophic thinking.
- + Continue to access and maintain connections with children's families and the community.
- + Check that very young children, the differentially able, the sick are provided with care and support.

DEVELOPMENT

- + Provide age appropriate and meaningful activities that address the growth, diversity, inclusion and development challenges of children in the community. Develop creative and innovative activities that address the current challenges.
- + Keep routines in place for children to be involved and participating in their daily responsibilities; Make plans with children and help them to work towards their goals.
- + Provide technology support, guidance and solutions.
- + Work in Community Spaces for collective and collaborative engagement for child development.

PROTECTION

- + Safe and risky behaviour will be defined for all children in the community. The Information will enable children to recognise, respond and report child abuse.
- + Prevent and respond to all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.
- + Ensure and empower children to be aware of their rights and the channels of communication to access / contact for their safety.
- + Child marriage and child labour prevention measures should be in place in all communities.
- + Planned conference groups for children to share information, including their own personal experiences and be in the care of identified, informed and trusted individuals.
- + Promote information on children's safety and health through our community groups- parents and village / ward child protection committees.
- + All actions concerning children will take into account the best interests of the child.

PARTICIPATION

- + Provision of Intensive Virtual Support to engage children in online activities to secure their learning and build strong and solid foundations for their future growth and development.
- + Children have online access to get together, attend programs, chat with friends and are provided with information and help.
- + Forums are provided for ensuring that children in the ‘situation’ talk about what they see, hear and understand and know that they can ask questions even questions we can’t answer; we set the tone, take cues from children and be reassuring.
- + Community engagement and participation in promoting child rights

3.3.16 GUIDELINES FOR CHILD SPONSORSHIP

- + Parents or guardians of children apply for sponsorship in the prescribed application format.
- + The decision on sponsorship is made collectively by the Executive Director, volunteers, and the staff team.
- + A sponsored child’s case history, periodic progress reports, and photograph are kept safe in written or electronic form by the Director of Child Development and Child Participation and Coordinators, and accessed only with permission
- + A sponsor receives a brief profile of the child along with a photograph. Children write and send cards to their sponsors periodically for authenticity. Once a year a photograph of the child is sent to the sponsors.
- + Staff responsible for child sponsorship programmes undergo regular orientation in Child Protection with regard to sponsor communication and sponsor visits. They are responsible for confidentiality of information, appropriateness of gifts and safety and participation in sponsor visits.



- ✦ New Dawn India based in the United Kingdom decides the final allocation for the sponsorship programme in consultation with the Executive Director.
- ✦ Children allotted sponsorship are given necessary details about their sponsors.
- ✦ The postal address, email id, website address, social media address, phone numbers and any other communication identity of the sponsor and the child is not exchanged with either sponsor or child for any reason and at any time.
- ✦ The contact between the sponsor and the child is established only through Sakthi - Vidiyal and New Dawn India.
- ✦ Sponsors are encouraged to write letters to their sponsored child addressed to Sakthi - Vidiyal. The letter is orally translated to the child in Tamil. Children write letters to their respective sponsors in Tamil and the same is translated to English and sent to the sponsors through New Dawn India.
- ✦ Children discontinuing from the Organization due to migration and other personal reasons are given six months to return to the Organization before their sponsors are informed and sponsorship cancelled.
- ✦ A sponsor discontinuing sponsorship informs Sakthi - Vidiyal through New Dawn India and the child is informed about discontinuation of sponsorship. A new sponsor is found for the child.
- ✦ Children for their safety and protection are not allowed on holidays in India with sponsors or to go abroad with sponsors on home visits or holidays.
- ✦ If and when youth have opportunities to study abroad after 18 years of age, interested sponsors are encouraged to extend support to them.

3.3.17 VISITS BY TRUSTEES / SPONSORS OF NEW DAWN INDIA

- ✦ The trustees of New Dawn India are welcomed to make informed and scheduled visits to Sakthi - Vidiyal.
- ✦ Any person sent by New Dawn India is certified by the trustees and undergo the procedures laid by New Dawn India for visits.
- ✦ Visits to the community and houses of children are always at the discretion of the Executive Director. Recognised staff members accompany sponsors and donors while visiting the projects and programmes on planned visits.
- ✦ Sponsors visit their sponsored child only at Sakthi - Vidiyal under staff supervision. Inappropriate behaviour with children curtails the visit and a report is submitted to New Dawn India.
- ✦ Visitors and donors are encouraged to maintain safe boundaries while relating to children.
- ✦ Visitors and donors are oriented on the expected dress code during visits.

3.4 RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION

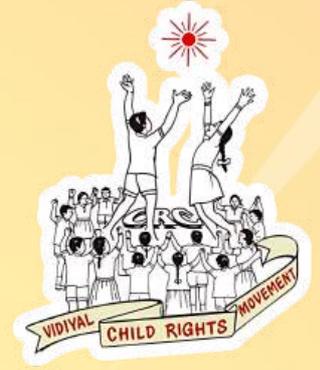
- ◆ Children attending Vidiyal's Child Education Centres are facilitated to form their base groups based on area of residence and age group.
- ◆ The children's base groups together form a federation – The Vidiyal Child Rights Movement.
- ◆ The Vidiyal Child Rights Movement is facilitated by Sakthi – Vidiyal for information sharing, capacity building, decision making, alliance building and for campaigning for child rights.
- ◆ Children elect their representatives based on a periodically reviewed criterion.
- ◆ Girl children's participation in leadership is ensured by proportionate representation.

- ◆ Two representatives from the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement are invited to participate in the Managing committee meetings of Sakthi for agenda concerning children.
- ◆ Vidiyal Child Rights Movement is consulted and informed decisions are taken when new projects and ideas for new programmes emerge.



- ◆ Children are consulted while designing and periodically reviewing the projects and programmes of the organization and appropriate change is effected based on consensus.
- ◆ The Vidiyal Child Rights Movement is consulted for planning and organizing joint programmes with other CSOs, CBOs and coalitions.
- ◆ Children are enabled to prepare budgets for their programmes.
- ◆ Information received through internet, emails, circular letters from other CSOs, CBOs, invitations for programmes and training are scrutinized and appropriate information is shared with the representatives of Vidiyal Child Rights Movement through an information register.
- ◆ Child appropriate information and posters are displayed on the notice board of the main centre and Shelter Home.

- ◆ Appropriate television programmes and newspapers are available for children in the Shelter Home.
- ◆ Child related appropriate information available with various Government departments are collected and presented to the children.
- ◆ Experts from different walks of life are invited to share information and encourage children to access appropriate information for their growth, development, protection and participation.
- ◆ Initiating and working with coalitions ensures participation of children.
- ◆ The children of Vidiyal Child Rights Movement are facilitated to develop collective leadership and to participate and represent in local, district, state, national and international platforms and networks.
- ◆ Participation in the children's movement and child networks is facilitated through trainings emphasizing communication, leadership, inter personal skills and analytical skills.
- ◆ Equal opportunities are ensured for children to attend programmes of other organizations and networks. Translation support is ensured for children while interacting with persons speaking in other languages and when they attend national and international programmes.
- ◆ Children are enabled to defend themselves in legal proceedings under the Juvenile Justice System by educating them on the Juvenile Justice Act.
- ◆ Work with people's organizations to advocate for and enable child representation in all structures of the society.



4. HUMAN RESOURCES

4.1 STAFF

- ◆ All staff joining Sakthi - Vidiyal are expected to work with children and to have an understanding and acceptance of Child Rights.
- ◆ Every new staff signs an undertaking to adhere to the Child Policy norms protecting children and their rights.
- ◆ An induction programme is held for all new staff – orientation about the organization, child policy, personnel policy, child rights, child psychology and concludes with field visits and introduction to the children.
- ◆ Staff have a probation period of one year after which a performance appraisal is done using participatory methods and continuance is based on the appraisal.
- ◆ An annual appraisal process will be conducted for all staff members
- ◆ Staff endorse that caste is an unjustifiable concept.
- ◆ Membership with caste affiliated associations and political parties are unacceptable.
- ◆ Training programmes are organised for staff and volunteers on alternate discipline methods to ensure children are protected.
- ◆ Every staff is given the opportunity to attend capacity building programmes conducted by other organizations and training institutions.
- ◆ Staff engage as resource persons/ consultants in training programmes with other organizations and coalitions is encouraged.



4.2 VOLUNTEERS

- ◆ Young adults' interest in voluntary work is nurtured and their potential is channelled for the care and protection of the younger children.
- ◆ During probation, volunteers are mentored, capacitated, and trained to work with children



4.2.1 QUALIFICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

- ◆ When children complete 12th standard they take up volunteer position in Vidiyal.
- ◆ Volunteers undergo probation for a period of one year, after 17 years of age. They are placed in Child Education Centres under the supervision of senior volunteers and staff to assist with the daily activities.
- ◆ During the probation period volunteers undergo internship which includes, on the job training, mentoring by staff and senior volunteers and monthly training and reflection sessions by senior staff.
- ◆ A graduation ceremony is organized for the trainee volunteers and they are inducted into the Volunteers' Forum as a full-fledged volunteer.
- ◆ This internship is mandatory for qualifying for appointment as volunteers.

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◆ The monthly training programme for volunteers undergoing internship includes training on Child Rights, Child Psychology, Duties and Responsibilities, Policies of the Organization, Understanding the Children's Movement, Leadership Qualities, Child Friendly Approach, Working with children, Modelling behaviour, Speaking with courtesy, Child Laws, Singing, Documentation, Accessing Information, Storytelling, Custodians of the properties of the organization Social Analysis and Social Conscientization.



◆ When they complete the probation period at 18 years, they are assessed for their skills and attitude in working with children and placed in the needed areas.

◆ Based on the assessment and those who have completed the mandatory training workshops conducted during their tenure in the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement will be considered for appointment as volunteers. The mandatory training workshops include Gender Sensitisation, Sexual Health Intervention Programme (SHIP), Child Rights Education, Protection from Drug Abuse, Life Skills Education and Career Guidance. They are placed in the Child Resource Centres with independent responsibilities.

SHIP

◆ Those who haven't completed the mandatory trainings before and during the internship have to complete those trainings in a later date to qualify themselves for appointment as volunteers. If not, they will not be given placement to work directly with the children in the Child Education Centres. They will be given other responsibilities like providing logistics and maintenance in the departments.

◆ Every volunteer is expected to give a minimum of 3 hours in a day. The hours may increase during weekend and special programmes. In a week each volunteer is expected to give a minimum of 21 hours.

◆ Volunteers / Animators work directly with children in the Child Education Centres. They report at 5 PM to the Child Education Centre and receive children with greetings and a pleasant look. They leave the centre at 8 PM after ensuring proper clean up and locking the centre.

◆ Those who study in the evening college are expected to volunteer their time in the mornings to prepare for the evening classes and weekend forums

4.2.2 QUALITIES AND ATTITUDE

- ◆ Volunteers are expected to be committed to the organization and their voluntary work, and for the high ethical standards in this policy
- ◆ High energy
- ◆ Creativity
- ◆ Proactive
- ◆ Respect for others and ability to work in a team
- ◆ Willingness to learn, to absorb new ideas, and to work with children with new skills
- ◆ Effective time management and accomplishing assigned tasks within stipulated time
- ◆ Transparency
- ◆ Flexibility and Willingness to stretch their limits
- ◆ Integrity

4.2.3 SKILLS

- ◆ Qualified volunteers are expected to possess skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. They are expected to have language skills especially in Tamil and English.
- ◆ Skills in facilitating children's forums and children's movement.

4.2.4 INDUCTION

- ◆ Induction programme is held for new volunteers in the month of July every year.
- ◆ Every volunteer signs an undertaking to adhere to the norms for protecting Children and their Rights.

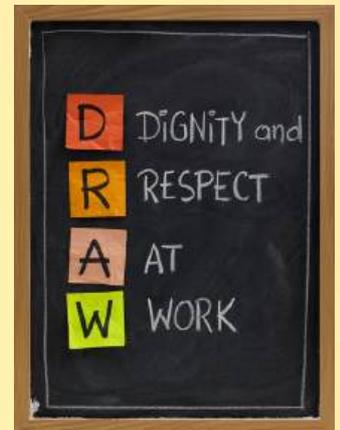
4.2.5 TRAINING

- ◆ Volunteers participate in all the training programmes designed and conducted for staff.
- ◆ Every volunteer is given the opportunity to attend capacity building programmes conducted by other organizations and training institutions.
- ◆ Volunteers engage as resource persons/ consultants in training programmes with other organizations and coalitions is encouraged.
- ◆ Performance appraisal is done once a year.



4.2.6 STYLE OF FUNCTIONING

- ◆ Volunteers demonstrate willingness and joy in working with children.
- ◆ The child is seen as the integral part of the work.
- ◆ Children are seen as individuals working together to achieve their full potential.
- ◆ All children are respected and their participation and decision making are based on their ability.



4.2.7 STRUCTURE

- ◆ The volunteer team comprises the Head Volunteer, Secretary, Treasurer, and members.
- ◆ The Head Volunteer reports to the Executive Director.
- ◆ Other volunteers take responsibilities such as, Centre in charge, Children's forum in charge and facilitators of the Children's Movement.
- ◆ There is a monthly review meeting in which volunteers review their work before the Executive Director or a person deputed by him. Constructive feedback is given to improve quality of child care and child protection in the Child Education Centres.

4.3 INTERNSHIP

4.3.1 GENERAL

- ◆ At a given period we take two students from an institution / college / referral agency. If the college wants to send more students, permission is needed before sending the students.
- ◆ The Executive Director of Sakthi-Vidiyal is the person in charge of finalizing student placements.
- ◆ The Director - Child Development plays the role as Internship Supervisor and is responsible for managing the day-to-day affairs of the placement students.
- ◆ Any specific requirements for student placements need to be discussed and finalized prior to the placement.
- ◆ Internships will be provided for a minimum of 15 days and above only.
- ◆ Interns are expected to sign an undertaking with regard to child protection and they are expected to adhere to the Child Policy of our organization.
- ◆ Interns are expected to adapt to the day schedule of Vidiyal – attendance is six days a week.
- ◆ Students are expected to follow the timings of Sakthi – Vidiyal. On a normal day, our working hours are as follows - 9.30 AM to 1.30 PM and resumes functioning from 4 PM to 8 PM. No waiver will be given in this regard. This timing may be changed and extended on days having special programmes and events. Students are expected to adapt and be accommodative to this changing schedule.
- ◆ Late attendance is unacceptable.
- ◆ If the student is taking leave during the placement period, he or she is expected to get the leave approved from the college / department with prior notice to Sakthi – Vidiyal. Students are expected to compensate their absence later with prior approval from Sakthi – Vidiyal.
- ◆ Students are expected to come in formal clothes with proper haircut.
- ◆ Usage of mobile phones during working hours is prohibited.

- ◆ Interns are not permitted use the office phones for their personal needs.
- ◆ Interns are not permitted to use the materials of the organization for their personal needs.
- ◆ Interns are expected to work hard for long hours and adapt to any situation that arise during the internship.
- ◆ Skills and talents of interns are always linked to the needs of Sakthi - Vidiyal.
- ◆ Costs for injuries sustained during the internship is covered by the intern through insurance or personal means.
- ◆ Interns are not eligible for honorarium or stipends or any financial compensation from Sakthi – Vidiyal.



4.3.2 INTERNSHIP FOR INDIAN STUDENTS

- ◆ Students bring an authorization letter requesting placement from the college signed by the principal or the head of the department.
- ◆ A meeting with the faculty to discuss the placement is always welcomed.
- ◆ Walk in placements are not accepted.
- ◆ We expect the college / institution sending students to take responsibility for the orienting of students about the mandatory norms regarding placements and to encourage them to avoid defaults.



4.3.3 INTERNSHIP FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

- ◆ Foreign interns are expected to fill the prescribed application form displayed in the website of the organization.
- ◆ Prospective foreign interns will be interviewed by the Executive Director / Member of the board, through email or other electronic devices.
- ◆ Selected foreign interns are provided with a letter of invitation and enabled to apply for entry visa for internship
- ◆ Foreign student will not be allowed to come on tourist visa for internship.
- ◆ Foreigners must register with the Police upon arrival.
- ◆ Staff may assist the foreign intern in finding boarding and lodging by providing appropriate information. The intern must arrange their own living, health, travel and other finances.
- ◆ All interns must have medical insurance and personal means to support themselves.
- ◆ Interns may not collect information from children for their personal use and may not lend their mobile phones, tablet, laptop to children.
- ◆ Interns study reports and research shall be submitted to Vidiyal and permission required for publication in accordance with their respective academic standards.

4.3.4 ADHERING TO THE CHILD POLICY OF SAKTHI – VIDIYAL

- ◆ The intern is expected to read, understand and adhere by the Sakthi -Vidiyal Child Policy on joining the internship programme.
- ◆ Placement students are expected to sign an undertaking to abide by Sakthi – Vidiyal’s Child Policy and organizational principles.
- ◆ Non compliance of the Child Policy will lead to termination of internship without any notice and a letter of censure will be sent to the said college.



4.3.5 CODE OF CONDUCT

- ◆ Children should be addressed by their names and will be held in respect.
- ◆ Interns will ensure that they always work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- ◆ Open communication and child appropriate language is used. Abusive language, ridiculing words, condemning words or emotional abuse is unacceptable.
- ◆ When faced with a difference of opinion between the intern and the children, the intern with the support of the coordinator or the director resolves the issue.
- ◆ Conflict prone incidents require the intern to share appropriate information to the Directors, children and parents to help reduce the tension.
- ◆ An intern accompanying a staff who is escorting children, gives priority to the care and protection of the escorted children. During such time strangers are discouraged from becoming familiar with children and food and gifts are not accepted.
- ◆ Interns are prohibited from contacting a child during non-working hours and/or independently taking a child to personal engagements and outings.
- ◆ Children are prevented from entering into vulnerable situations and if such situations emerge unexpectedly children are removed immediately to a safe place.
- ◆ Interns are prohibited from capturing children's images (photographed or video graphed) in their personal cameras or cell phones.
- ◆ Interns are not permitted to allow children to handle mobile phones, iPod, laptops and other electronic devices as this compromises the children's safety.
- ◆ Interns mobile/phone/email contacts are not shared with children and interns do not request for mobile/phone/email contacts of the children and their families. Contacting children and their families are prohibited.
- ◆ Downloading, storing and sharing of child inappropriate information via mobile phones and other electronic devices are prohibited.

- ◆ Norms of touching, grooming, using suggestive language, messaging, keeping personal meetings and secrets is avoided with all children especially the girl child.
- ◆ Inappropriate behaviour and abusive relationship with children are subject to legal action.
- ◆ Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching is prohibited under every circumstance.
- ◆ It is always prohibited to engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- ◆ Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer or another intern is reported to the Executive Director, who takes the steps considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- ◆ Interns using prescribed medication are responsible for keeping and using their medication safely and are prohibited from using medication in an open environment.
- ◆ Interns are prohibited from using drugs and alcohol.
- ◆ Interns are not allowed to take children for personal programs or overnight stays.
- ◆ Interns are prohibited from giving any kind of gifts or materials to a child or children.
- ◆ Ridiculing children on any basis including caste, colour, complexion, height, weight, ability, appearance, gender, area of living, type of work and cultural orientation is avoided in any performance or publication of the organization.
- ◆ Interns are prohibited from engaging in personal work while working with children.

GUIDELINES

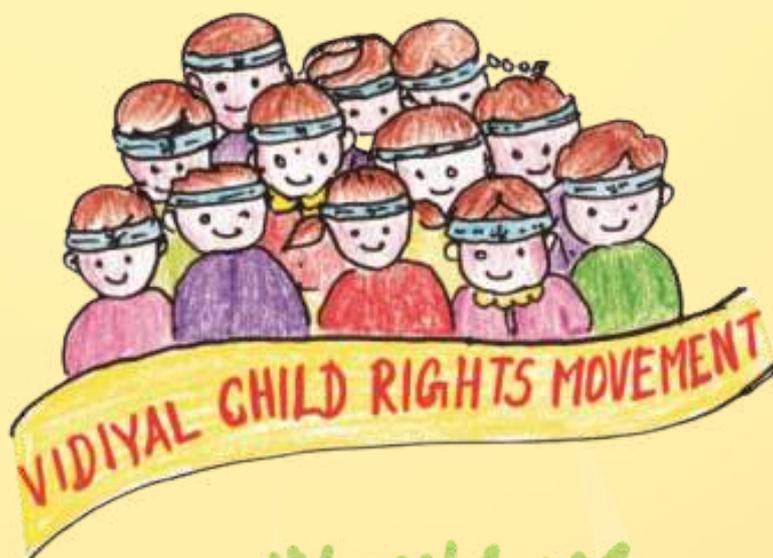
4.3.6 GOODWILL AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION RELATED MEASURES

- ◆ Interns are responsible for their personal belongings and cash. If they lose their belongings or cash they should never directly enquire to or accuse the children.
- ◆ Interns submit their internship report on the last day of the internship. The internship and attendance certificate will be issued after submission and acceptance of the report.
- ◆ Interns are expected to adhere to the organization's Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) policy and ensure a harassment-free environment for all.



4.3.7 RESEARCH

- ◆ Informed consent of the child and the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement is required for the purpose of academic research with prior permission and guidelines from the organization.
- ◆ A recognized staff member is present at the interview of Children to ensure the safety of the child. Any objectionable behaviour of the student/intern automatically leads to termination and forfeiture of the continuation of the research study.
- ◆ All academic research findings are shared with the Organization and the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement.



4.3.8 PROCEDURE TO CONDUCT STUDY/RESEARCH AT VIDIYAL

- ◆ Interns intending to conduct a study amongst the children, staff, parents or any other stakeholder of Vidiyal will apply to the Executive Director in writing countersigned by the college principal and head of department.
- ◆ Title of the study, objectives and methodology should be stated in the application.
- ◆ The written approval of the Executive Director is necessary before the intern is allowed to conduct the study.
- ◆ The interview schedule or questionnaire will be submitted and approved by the Executive Director before the commencement of the study.
- ◆ During the course of the study a designated staff will accompany the intern and interviews will be conducted in the presence of the staff.
- ◆ An attested copy of the study/research is submitted to Sakthi-Vidiyal.
- ◆ All academic research findings copyright belongs to Sakthi-Vidiyal.
- ◆ The findings will be shared with the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement by the organization.
- ◆ The intern is permitted to submit the findings to the college only in connection with his or her academic requirements. Sharing the findings with media, publishing the findings in social media or in websites is totally prohibited. Interns indulging in such acts will face legal action.



5. SKILLS

5.1 KNOWLEDGE

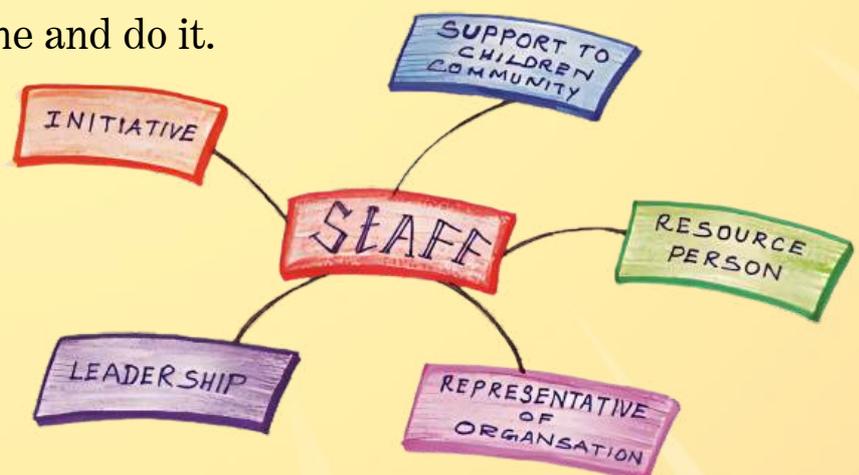
- ◆ All staff have familiarity and knowledge of child rights and child related issues.
- ◆ Staff familiarize with Child friendly approaches and practices.

5.2 SUPPORT

- ◆ Staff empathize with children and tease out problems.
- ◆ Staff are solution oriented, and provide guidance and support plans.
- ◆ Staff recognise that different children need different kinds of support and the importance of the support system.
- ◆ Staff are encouraged to be objective, factual and to work with flexibility.
- ◆ Staff remain the professional in the staff - child relationship.
- ◆ Staff assess and interpret the needs of children and child led organizations.

5.3 INITIATIVE

- ◆ Plan programmes with children on child rights.
- ◆ Design child friendly tools for/ with children.
- ◆ Recognise what needs to be done and do it.
- ◆ Use theatre and the arts.



5.4 NETWORK

- ◆ Awareness of range of voluntary organizations working for the cause of children.
- ◆ Ability to build a data base for appropriate need-based referral to access services for children.
- ◆ Ability to recognise opportunities and act upon them.
- ◆ Ability to represent the organization at all forums.
- ◆ Confidence to make connections in a social and work context.
- ◆ Ability to recognise synergies between organizations and children.
- ◆ Leadership qualities.
- ◆ Ability to build relationships.

6. STYLE OF FUNCTIONING

- ◆ Dignity and respect of the child is maintained by every individual who interacts with and relates to the child.
- ◆ Caring relationships are built on mutual trust and empower children to share in decision making.
- ◆ Staff are congruent in their communication and in their participation with children.
- ◆ Acceptance, humour and pleasant approach are expected while relating to people and children.
- ◆ Staff understand the needs of children and respond with timeliness, appropriateness and maturity.
- ◆ Appreciation is given to children regarding their progress and growth. Constructive feedback is given when appropriate.
- ◆ Children's needs are prioritized and appropriate standards are met.

- ◆ Responsibilities and duties primarily recognize the welfare of the child as paramount.
- ◆ Relationship with the children is based on positive regard and avoidance of power and control needs of the staff.
- ◆ Children's queries and points of view are responded with consideration to reasoning, facts, difficulties in execution, humour and acceptance.
- ◆ Listening to children and understanding, hearing and acting on what is not expressed is seen as crucial for genuineness and concreteness in working with children.
- ◆ Child rights perspective is essential in action and implementation. Belief in the child's innate capacity to express and make choices is supported and fostered.
- ◆ Presence of mind and independent prompt action is encouraged and supported especially when advocating child participation, decision making and protection.
- ◆ Provisions are the right of the child and staff maintain deference in attending to children's needs.
- ◆ Faith in children, respecting the opinion of children, accepting and recognizing child leadership and permitting children to be decision makers and supporting child participation and initiatives is practiced.
- ◆ Communication and relationship are based on accepting differences, being open, non-judgmental, unconditional, genuine, respecting the child's confidences and maintaining confidentiality and prioritizing child protection.
- ◆ Transactions of money and purchase are abided by standards of best practice and best price.
- ◆ Interns, student placement is encouraged and supported with strict adherence to the expectations of Sakthi – Vidiyal and the acceptance of the Child Policy norms.
- ◆ Dignity of labour is maintained.

Sakthi is a non-profit organization established in 1993. VIDIYAL, meaning “dawn” in Tamil, was initiated as a programme of Sakthi, committed to the cause of children from socially excluded communities and those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds in Madurai, South India. Vidiyal reaches out to high-risk children and their families. Through our work, children gain education, skills, and self-confidence within a caring and supporting environment. Innovative programmes are designed, which include short stories, songs, theatre, thematic children's camps, and enriching activities. Our programmes are designed to meet the specific and individual needs of children and adolescents.

In 2000, children came together to form the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement. This movement works for the participation of children in matters concerning them and against all forms of child exploitation.

Sakthi - Vidiyal and Vidiyal Child Rights Movement participate and facilitate in the initiatives of networks supporting Child Rights, The Forum for Promotion of Child Participation (FPCP), Federation of Children's Movements for Right to Participation (FCMRP), National Forum for Child Participation (NFCP), Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL), Young Voices National Movement and National Action & Coordination Group-Ending Violence Against Children (NACG-EVAC)-India .

