

Child (Adolescent and Vulnerable Adult) Protection Policy, versie 1

Respect for everyone's rights is a fundamental component of the IPPF Declaration of Sexual Rights, which necessarily also encompasses their right to protection from all forms of abuse. Children, young people and vulnerable adults in particular are susceptible to abuse and exploitation.

To ensure that Rutgers proactively safeguards the rights of all young people and vulnerable adults, the following policy was developed, with a view to simultaneously promoting ethical behaviour, preventing abuse, and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all members of staff, including partner organisations funded by Rutgers, temporary employees, volunteers, trainees, consultants and members of the Supervisory Board who have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

1 Basic principles

Rutgers acknowledges that, as rights-holders, children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to access both information and services in the area of sexual and reproductive health, and that these should be provided in such a manner as to protect them from abuse or exploitation.

Rutgers tolerates no form of abuse or exploitation whatsoever of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, and therefore endeavours to make all members of staff and partners (see Scope) aware of – while supporting them in bearing – their responsibility to prevent abuse and to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Rutgers acknowledges that the denial of the sexual rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and their rights to participation and expression in particular, is the partial cause of their vulnerability.

Rutgers feels that adults, parents, guardians, carers, care workers, teachers and others who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, are duty-bearers in the area of sexual rights, and therefore bear responsibility to ensure that the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults are observed.

Rutgers is convinced that the cooperation of all members of the organisation's staff is essential to the creation of a safe environment for all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

2 Policy

Rutgers itself is not an organisation which provides care services to children, young people and vulnerable adults. In exceptional cases, however, it does perform practical duties aimed at these groups. Furthermore, it may work with these groups when carrying out research, developing interventions, or for the purposes of communication.

Rutgers therefore applies the following guidelines with regard to HRM matters and the implementation and embedding of and compliance with its protection policy.

2.1 HRM

During the process of recruitment and selection, it should be determined whether and to what extent a new member of staff (or person engaged by Rutgers) is to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults. In the event that a person is to perform practical duties (e.g. the implementation of mandatory educational programmes) then a certificate of good behaviour or criminal record check is required. Furthermore, this matter should be raised during the job interview, while members of staff who are to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults should also be asked to provide references.

In addition, Rutgers requests a formal statement from other organisations which it funds, in which they pledge to observe its Child (Adolescent and Vulnerable Adult) Protection Policy.

2.2 Practical duties with children, young people or vulnerable adults

In the event that practical activities (e.g. mandatory educational programmes) are to be carried out on a structural basis, then the applicable protocols and policy should be observed.

In the event of incidental collaboration with children, young people or vulnerable adults, then the appointed project leader or manager bears responsibility to ensure that both the safety and privacy of the persons in question are protected.

The following guidelines are applicable with regard to the management of confidential information on young people/adults, with a view to preventing the portrayal of harmful or degrading images of young people/ vulnerable adults, while ensuring that their rights are observed:

Communication

With a view to protecting children, young adults and vulnerable groups (e.g. the elderly, people with disabilities, LGBT) Rutgers observes the following basic principles with regard to communication. These are applicable both in the field of public communications and communication either during the course of or with regard to an intervention or survey:

- a. Rutgers ensures that, whenever it intends to use images of children/ young people up to 18 years of age, it obtains the necessary written consent of their parents/carers/coaches. In the case of people with an intellectual disability, too, the written consent of their parents/carers/coaches is required.
- b. Rutgers ensures that communications in the form of images/captions relating to children, adolescents/ young adults and vulnerable groups are respectful. Their names should not be used unless this is relevant or logical in the particular context (e.g. when a child is interviewed in a video), in which case the consent of the persons in question (or their representatives: parents or carers) is required.
- c. Rutgers exercises due care and attention in managing information pertaining to young or vulnerable people, while ensuring that the provision of said information does not enable third parties to ascertain a person's identity, unless their express consent has been obtained.
- d. Rutgers ensures that visual material produced by third parties at its behest complies with the aforementioned conditions.

- e. Rutgers ensures that, in the event of third-party use of visual material belonging to Rutgers (e.g. by a partner organisation) formal assurance is obtained of compliance with the conditions listed above with regard to respectful use.
- f. Rutgers ensures that, whenever it make use of stock photography, it cooperates solely with agencies which have been established as holders of the required (portrait) rights.

Research and intervention development

Rutgers observes the following guidelines, with a view to safeguarding the rights, safety and welfare of the participants (including children, young people and vulnerable adults) in scientific research or intervention.

The general principles applicable are:

- Honesty and due care
- Reliability
- Verifiability
- Responsibility

The following additional principles apply to research:

- Impartiality
- Independence

Checklist

Researchers and developers of interventions should pay heed to the following points:

- a. *Non-harmful procedures*
The researcher/developer should not carry out any research or development process that may harm the participant either physically or psychologically.
- b. *Informed consent*
Prior to requesting consent, the researcher/developer should inform participants regarding all aspects of the survey or development process which may affect their willingness to participate, while also answering any questions posed in a manner which is clearly comprehensible to the participant.
- c. *Consent*
In the event that informed consent is not applicable to the participant, by virtue of their age or disability, then the researcher/developer should make an effort to acquaint the participant with the circumstances, and should preferably obtain some form of consent.
- d. *The consent of parents/carers/guardians*
Consent is required for all children under the age of 18 years and participants under guardianship or mentorship to take part in any studies or development procedures.
- e. *Additional consent*
Informed consent also has to be obtained from every person, such as a schoolteacher, whose interactions with the child are also the subject of a study or intervention development.
- f. *Incentives*
Any form of remuneration awarded for participation in a survey or development project should be reasonable, and should therefore not exceed level of remuneration normally received by participants.
- g. *Threat*
Should a participant become susceptible to any form of sexual abuse, or their safety or welfare be threatened or placed in jeopardy, during the course of the survey or the development process,

then this should be reported in accordance with the applicable protocols. These include the Reporting Code Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Act (*Wet Meldcode*) and, in the event that those participating do so within an institution or school, the procedures applicable at said establishment.

h. Unforeseen consequences

In the event that research or intervention development leads to unforeseen undesirable consequences for the participants, then corrective measures should be taken immediately, to prevent any recurrence both in the project in question and comparable research or activities in the future.

i. Reporting results

Given that a researcher or developer occupies a position of authority, undue significance may be attributed to their statements. Caution should be exercised in deciding upon the manner in which results, opinions or recommendation are expressed.

j. Implications of findings

Researchers and developers of interventions should be aware of the possible the social, political and human implications of their survey or development project, and therefore exercise particular caution in presenting their findings.

k. Equality

Researchers and developers should invariably treat participants both respectfully and as equals.

l. Anonymity

The anonymity of information should be safeguarded, while the use of information should be restricted to solely that for which consent has been obtained.

m. Privacy and confidentiality

Rutgers takes every reasonable precaution to protect the privacy and confidentiality of both participants and institutions.

2.3 Embedding the policy

Members of staff and employees/persons representing Rutgers who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in an occupational capacity, receive training and/or support in creating an environment that is safe for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Measures are taken to ensure that partners, recipients of grants, consultants, etc., who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, act in accordance with the principles and standards applied by Rutgers with regard to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

2.4 Compliance with the policy

In the event of complaints or alleged breach of this Child (Adolescent and Vulnerable Adult) Protection Policy, Rutgers' complaints procedure should be applied. Depending on the nature of the complaint/breach, the responsible complaints coordinator or director shall decide whether sanctions are to be applied as a consequence of established breaches.

Rutgers ensures that its partners, recipients of grants, consultants, etc., who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, act in accordance with the principles and standards applied by Rutgers with regard to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Rutgers updates this policy at least every three years.

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5/5



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