

## **APPENDIX 3 - Sample child protection recruitment guidelines<sup>1</sup>**

### **Child Protection Guidelines on Recruitment**

It is strongly advisable to state that you have a child protection policy in the wording of any job advertisements. This will demonstrate your commitment to child protection issues and will act as a deterrent to individuals seeking out organisations with weak protection procedures.

#### **Suggested wording for job advertisements:**

“(Insert name of organisation or program) recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to the safety and protection of children (or prevention of child abuse) in our care / activities / programmes.”

OR, for shorter job ads

“(Inset name of organisation or program) has a child protection policy in place”

OR

“Candidates will be expected to comply with (insert name of organisation or program) child protection policy”

#### **Successful candidates will be expected to comply with the following as a condition of employment:**

- 1)** Signing a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including spent convictions. This declaration must be returned to (insert name of organisation or program).
- 2)** Providing the name and contact information of two character references they have known for no less than two years, excluding family members. This declaration must be returned to (insert name of organisation or program).
- 3)** Both acceptance of and commitment to our Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct for working with children.
- 4)** Satisfactory clearance through a police check conducted by the Criminal Records Bureau where applicable.

#### **Guidance on addressing child protection issues in interviews:**

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<sup>1</sup> Child Hope UK, c/o Right To Play, China

### **During the interview:**

- 1)** According to good practice, the interview should also be seen as an opportunity to assess candidates' suitability in relation to child protection. The Child Protection Officer should remind the interview panel of some basics in relation to child abuse, e.g. that abusers look completely 'normal', are often very skilled at deception, salesmanship and 'grooming' (of organisations as well as individual children).
- 2)** Therefore, bearing in mind the principles of an equal opportunities interview (i.e. everyone should be asked the same questions without discrimination), the interview panel should pay attention to:
  - gaps in employment history (if the candidate has had a career working in children's issues)
  - frequent changes of employment or address (if the candidate has had a career working in children's issues)
  - reasons for leaving employment (especially if this appears sudden)
  - It is also good practice to get clarification on any duties or accomplishments that come across as 'vague' in a CV in relation to work with children)
  - keep an eye out for body language and evasion, contradiction and discrepancies in answers given (although this must be interpreted in context and in a spirit of common sense)
- 3)** It is important in the interview that the issue of child abuse is openly discussed and that the interview panel reinforces that the organisation has a comprehensive child protection policy and procedures in place. Transparency is an important part of abuse prevention: an abuser may decide that there are not enough opportunities to offend in an open and aware culture.
- 4)** Direct and challenging questions encourage self-selection (i.e. candidates withdrawing themselves from the process).  
Suggested / possible direct questions:
  - Have you ever worked anywhere where a colleague abused a child? What happened and how was it handled? What did you think of the way it was handled? Would you have handled it differently yourself?
  - Are you aware of our Child Protection Policy? What do you think of it?
  - When might it be appropriate and inappropriate to be alone with a child (on, say, an overseas project visit)?
  - How and when might it be appropriate to comfort a

child?

- What sort of things might make a photograph of a street child inappropriate for publication in our organisation's annual report? [the interview panel should be looking for things like: inappropriate clothing; if the photo depicts prostituted children / children in conflict with the law their faces should be blurred and their names changed; was the photo taken and used with the child's permission? etc.]
- Is there anything that we might find out about during reference checks that you'd like to talk about?

**5) Warning signs (including, but are not limited to):**

- overly smooth presentation or keenness to please
- poor listening or rapport or communication skills
- strange or inappropriate questions / statements about children
- expresses an interest in spending time alone with children / in working with children of a particular age or gender
- excessive interest in child photography
- background of regular overseas travel to destinations where child sex tourism is prevalent

**6)** However it may be none of these. Signs might not be clear. "The skilled paedophile may not be detected by gut feelings or obvious warning signs. They may simulate the very person you had in mind for this job." But don't give up - remain alert: "Remember, listen to your gut reaction but harness it with good practice!"

**7)** In spite of these questions, the interview should be sure to end on a positive note

**Guidance on addressing child protection issues in reference checks:**

- 1)** Ask referees about the suitability of the candidate to have direct contact with children. Another good question is – "does the referee know of any issues or incidents involving the candidate and his/her contact with children?"
- 2)** Ask the referee questions about the candidate's motivation to work in youth organisations

- 3)** Ask questions about their relationship with referees – this has often revealed that the referee only has a small amount of knowledge about the person.
- 4)** Make notes of the referee's comments and place them on the personal file of the candidate.