

## APSD-Agenda 21 internal policy and ethical rules regarding the activity of adults who work with children

"Assistance and Programs for Sustainable Development – Agenda 21" is a Romanian non-governmental association of national interest, not-for-profit and unaffiliated politically or religiously.

**The fundamental goal** of APSD – Agenda 21 is to support Romanian policies and efforts to promote and implement in Romania the objectives of Sustainable Development.

In order to fulfil this aim the organization assumed the mission to:

- Develop partnerships with local authorities in order to value local initiatives and to increase efficiency of local governance;
- Promote education activities in the Human Rights Field, with emphasis on civic education and democratic citizenship.
- To strengthen the role of social actors with high potential in enforcement of sustainable development: children and young people, local communities, private sector and business community, scientific community, media;
- To provide assistance and support for marginalized groups or groups at risk of social exclusion.

**The key-concept** of APSD – Agenda 21 is **Sustainable Development**. A safe and prosperous future cannot be thought outside the concept of sustainable development.

Privileged target-groups are **children and young people**. Opportunities for education and development that are offered to children and young people are the guaranty of a healthy society.

As an organization that promotes the respect for human rights and human dignity, APSD – Agenda 21 strongly believes that each child, participant in its programs, is entitled to safety and protection, avoiding/flagging any behavior that can do harm to children physically or emotionally.

APSD – Agenda 21's projects take into consideration the best interests of the child, the respect of his/her rights, wishes and feelings, as well as child protection from any abuse (physical, mental, emotional, sexual)

For the purpose of the present document, the following terms are defined as follows:

**child** – any person under 18 years old.

**staff** - any person that has responsibilities in the implementation of a program/activity of the organization; if children are involved in such posture, they are the object of this policy too, but, at the same time, they are responsible as well for its implementation.

**child protection** – any activity aiming to prevent or stop a behavior considered to be dangerous for the mental and physical integrity of the child.

**child abuse** – any treatment that may affect the child physically, emotionally and sexually; it is also considered abuse the neglect of the child's physical and psycho-emotional needs.

### **APSD – Agenda 21's policy**

The attention that APSD – Agenda 21 pays to the programs devoted to children, being aware of the essential role of education that promotes human rights and freedom of expression, led to the necessity to elaborate internal procedures that regulate the activity with children.

The activity of APSD – Agenda 21 is based on the principles on the International Convention for Children Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Principles**

The activity of APSD – Agenda 21 is based on the fundamental principle of the best interests of the child. The planning of the activities has at its core the interest and welfare of child the way they are mentioned in the Convention for Children Rights.

APSD-Agenda 21's activities respect the interests, wishes and feelings of the participants.

APSD – Agenda 21 takes all the measures for the safety of children, ensuring that its programs nor those that implement them represent any threat to the children integrity.

The activities for children are opened to everybody, no matter of ethnicity, social statute, religion or gender, respecting and promoting the principles of equality and social inclusion.

- the staff, volunteers and all those who interact with children during the activities of APSD – Agenda 21 are prepared for such activities and informed about the rules of children safety and the legislation in force and they present the moral guarantee of working with this category. APSD – Agenda 21 staff has didactical experience acquired through academic background as well as practical activity.

The members of the staff will indicate to the competent authorities any physical, mental or other child abuse which is or isn't directly linked with the program developed by APSD – Agenda 21.

If APSD – Agenda 21 works in partnership with other actors, it makes sure that the partners a well meet the necessary requirements in order to work with children.

All those who work with children during the programs developed by APSD – Agenda 21 are obliged to respect the following Code of Ethics.

### **The Code of Ethics of APSD – Agenda 21 for activities with children**

#### **To those who work with children, it's completely forbidden:**

- to hit, abuse physically or verbally children;
- to develop physical/sexual relations with children;
- to have relations with children that can be considered acts of exploitation and abuse;
- to behave abusively or expose children to risks of abuse;
- to use an inappropriate speech, to make inappropriate suggestions or give inappropriate, abusive or offensive advice;
- to behave inappropriately from a sexual point of view;

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- to keep home, during the night time, unmonitored children who attend APSD-Agenda 21's programs;
- to sleep in the same room or in the same bed with a child participant in APSD – Agenda 21's programs.
- to do personal stuff for children, which they can do by themselves;
- to contribute to an illegal behavior, unsafe and abusive of children;
- to behave in ways that provoke humiliation, depreciation of children or to commit acts in any way of emotional abuse.
- to discriminate, treat unequally or support only some of the children by excluding others.

### **It is mandatory for the staff:**

- To recognize/identify the situations which can provide risks and to handle them;
- To plan and organize the activity inside the programs in order to reduce the risks to a minimum level
- To assure that there is a culture of openness to allow the approach and discuss any problems or concerns of children
- To make sure that the members of the staff are responsible so that inefficient activities or potentially abuse behaviors to pass without noticing them.
- To discuss with children about the relation with staff and encourage them to approach any issue that might concern them;
- To empower children - to discuss with them about their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable and what they can do in case of any issue.