

HALO Foundation CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

DECLARATION

1. Introduction

HALO Foundation declares its commitment to protect children from harm, abuse, and neglect. All actions undertaken by the organization prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of children and are guided by the best interests of the child. The policy is approved and signed by the Foundation's Board of Directors and is in accordance with the rights of the child as set out in the UN Convention, European, as well as Bulgarian legislation.

2. Purpose and scope

This Child Protection Policy of HALO Foundation aims to:

- Ensure that all children are treated with dignity, respect, and in accordance with their rights.
- Prevent, identify, and respond to any risks of harm, abuse, or exploitation affecting children.
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment in all HALO Foundation projects, events, and activities involving children.
- Provide clear guidance for all staff, volunteers, interns, board members, and partner organizations on expected standards of behavior, responsibilities, and reporting procedures.

This policy applies to all HALO Foundation employees, board members, volunteers, interns, consultants, contractors, and partner organizations who may come into contact with children through HALO Foundation's programs, projects, or activities.

3. Principles

The principles underlying the Child Protection Policy of the HALO Foundation are:

- All children have equal rights to protection.
- In our work, we prioritize the health, safety, and life, as well as the psychological and emotional well-being of children.
- The actions we take at all times are guided by the best interests of the child in relation to their protection and the respect of their rights.
- Every member of the HALO Foundation team, including interns and volunteers (who have direct contact with children or information about children during activities or projects carried out by the HALO Foundation), has the responsibility to support safe conditions for the children with whom they work or interact in the performance of their duties and responsibilities.
- The HALO Foundation supports and encourages its partners to take responsibility for complying with the minimum requirements for ensuring the safety of children with whom they have direct contact during activities or projects implemented by the HALO Foundation.

4. Definitions

- A **child** is anyone under 18 years of age.
- A **child at risk** may experience or witness violence, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, early marriage, human trafficking, or any activity that harms their development, safety, or dignity.
- **Violence and neglect** include physical, psychological, or sexual abuse, failure to provide necessary care, and abandonment.

5. Risk assessment and prevention

The HALO Foundation takes into account the Policy and its principles when preparing relevant new elements and structures in its work, new projects, and activities involving or relating to children.

6. Code of conduct

The values incorporate the main principles of the Policy, which all employees are required to follow. The organizational values of the HALO Foundation are included in the contracts of all employees and participants. They are referenced in decision-making,

both in daily activities and in key organizational decisions. These values are also the focus of group internal meetings related to staff and member activities.

7. Mechanism for Reporting

HALO Foundation has a clear and confidential mechanism for reporting any risk or suspicion of harm to children. All staff, volunteers, interns, program participants, visitors, and partners are responsible for reporting concerns to their manager or the Policy Officer. Reports are investigated promptly, appropriate actions are taken, and serious cases are reported to authorities.

8. Communications

All internal and external communications respect the dignity and rights of children, families, and communities. The use of children's images or stories follows strict rules under national and international law, requiring prior written parental/guardian consent

9. Monitoring and Updating

The Policy is reviewed and revised periodically, or when a need is identified by the Policy Officer of the organization. Changes are approved by the Board of Directors.

10. Declaration

HALO Foundation commits to upholding these principles in all interactions with children in the scope of HALO Foundation activities. All individuals working with or representing the HALO Foundation are required to read, understand, and comply with this Child Protection Policy.

Declarant:

Kristina Yordanova
HALO Foundation

Latest revision and update: 26.08.2025

Date: 26.08.2025