Child Protection Policy

Element	Details
Organisation	BuKi – Help for Children in Eastern Europe e.V. Pfarrstraße 15 88348 Bad Saulgau
Core principle	Protecting children from harm is a fundamental responsibility and an essential part of our organisational integrity.
Target group	All children under the age of 18 who take part in activities, community programmes, youth camps and digital platforms.
Child Protection Officer	Stefan Zell, Board Member, BuKi e.V.
Independent Point of Contact	Heidi Haller, Board Member, BuKi e.V.
Review cycle	Annually or immediately following any significant operational change or incident. Latest version: 26 October 2026

Effective date: 26 October 2026

1. Institutional Commitment and Scope

Based on our institutional values, we reaffirm that the protection of children from all forms of harm is a priority in all areas of our work. We recognise the inherent dignity and rights of every child, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in national legislation.

- **Scope:** This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trainees, contractors and project partners acting on behalf of the organisation.
- **Zero tolerance:** We adopt a strict zero-tolerance approach to physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying and discriminatory treatment.
- **Inclusion:** Support for and participation in the organisation's activities are never conditional on religious, political or social affiliations.

2. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Anyone acting on behalf of the organisation must uphold the highest standards of integrity and respect professional boundaries.

All staff must:

- Treat children with respect, empathy and with due regard for their personal dignity.
- ensure that activities take place in a transparent, open and accountable environment (whilst avoiding one-to-one meetings in private wherever possible).
- maintain professional boundaries in both physical and digital communication (unauthorised private messages or the sharing of inappropriate media are prohibited).
- Respect children's privacy and protect personal data in accordance with the GDPR.

Staff and volunteers must never:

- subject a child to physical punishment, humiliation or psychological abuse.
- Abuse positions of trust or power to establish exploitative or inappropriate relationships.
- Publish identifiable images of children in sensitive or vulnerable situations without the express, informed consent of their parents.

3. Safe recruitment and vetting

The organisation undertakes to screen all individuals who work with children or carry out voluntary work in order to prevent potential offenders from gaining access.

- **Vetting procedures:** The management reviews professional history, references and qualifications.
- **Compliance with legal requirements:** Prior to recruitment, criminal record checks (such as the certificate of good conduct required under Romanian Law No. 118/2019) and equivalent international background checks are obtained for the staff concerned.

4. Risk assessment and safe activities

Before organising camps, youth gatherings or regular youth programmes, organisers must carry out an appropriate risk assessment covering the safety of venues, transport, staff-to-child ratios and emergency protocols.

- **Consent:** For structured programmes, the lawful consent of parents/guardians and the child's ongoing consent must be obtained.
- **Safe environment:** Before an event begins, first-aid arrangements, the availability of emergency contacts and clear rules for collecting and dropping off children must be established.

5. Reporting procedures and response

Anyone who observes, suspects or receives a report of child abuse must act immediately.

1. **Immediate safety:** In the event of imminent danger, the emergency services must be contacted without delay.
2. **Listening and recording:** Listen calmly to the child without promising absolute confidentiality, avoid leading questions and record factual statements accurately.
3. **Internal notification:** Inform the child protection officer immediately (or the independent escalation contact if the officer is personally involved).
4. **Legal duty to report:** The duty to report to the relevant authorities (social services/child protection agencies) must be fulfilled in accordance with applicable law. Internal investigations do not replace or delay the legal duty to report.
5. **Protection against reprisals:** Strict confidentiality and protection against reprisals are guaranteed for any person who reports a suspected case in good faith.

6. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Senior management and project coordinators are responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated, understood and implemented in all local and regional activities. Senior management reviews this framework annually to incorporate lessons learnt and ensure ongoing compliance with standards and legislative changes.

Approved by



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Stefan Zell
(Executive Board)

26 October 2026