

Supporting children in times of need

Inappropriate actions even with good intentions may cause a damaging effect on children. Identifying the suitable recourse is crucial for the child's wellbeing.

Counselling

- ▶ Develop empathetic listening skills.
- ▶ Encourage children to be courageous in overcoming their fears.
- ▶ Do not moral police the child.
- ▶ Do not engage in victim-shaming/blaming.
- ▶ Do not proceed based on any assumption or pre conceived notions.
- ▶ Give hope to the child that they will be protected and that their problems will be addressed.
- ▶ Protect the confidentiality & privacy of the child.

Reporting

Promptly report instances of child sexual abuse. Failure to report will make teachers liable to punishment, as per POCSO Act, 2012.

Reintegration

- ▶ Whether a child survivor or child in conflict with law, enable them to have a renewed start.
- ▶ Endorse self-esteem and personal confidence of children.
- ▶ Continuously follow-up on children and make them feel less detached from social interactions.
- ▶ Provide a calm environment, minimize distractions, emphasize routines and recreate a safe environment.

Building a Healthy Teacher-Child Relationship

- ▶ Instil confidence in children that they are not alone.
- ▶ Develop an attitude to accept children's mistakes.
- ▶ Promote transparent conversation with children.
- ▶ Always create an emotionally safe environment for children.
- ▶ Help children to overcome behavioural issues by endorsing continuous communication.
- ▶ Restrict comparison and encourage constructive criticism only.
- ▶ Entertain positive interactions in classroom environment. Ensure children enjoin a kind and polite attitude towards their peers.
- ▶ Interact with parents more frequently to understand their concerns and advise parents to not pressure children.
- ▶ Eliminate fear of social stigma in children by boosting self-confidence and trust in them.
- ▶ Success lies in openness, safety, confidence, unconditional acceptance, empathy, and positive regard.
- ▶ Believe the child, build trust with the child.



TAMIL NADU STATE JUDICIAL ACADEMY and DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

(Government of Tamilnadu)

in association with

UNICEF



Handout on Protection of Child Rights

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Ideal Behaviour of Teachers towards Children

- ▶ Follow the three P's - Prevention, Protection and Parental Responsibility.
- ▶ Be aware of the laws and regulations pertaining to child safety and child rights. Respect the right of a child to grow in a safe environment, free from neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation.
- ▶ Respect the dignity, freedom and privacy of children. Provide guidance without control and freedom without neglect.
- ▶ Step into the shoes of a child/adolescent to understand their perspective. Imbibe thoughtfulness, empathy, politeness ensuring truthfulness and fairness.
- ▶ Emphasise the importance of children's mental health. Teach children to regulate their emotions in a healthy manner.
- ▶ Keep a non-judgmental and supportive attitude towards children. Be a positive role model.
- ▶ Get rid of any implicit or explicit bias and discrimination based on children's social, economic or cultural background. Promote sensitivity on neurodivergence, physical and intellectual disabilities.
- ▶ Promote gender sensitivity including queer identities, and create an all-inclusive learning atmosphere.
- ▶ Understand child psychology, and the age-related concerns of children, teenagers and adolescents.

Issues faced by school children

- ▶ Stress related to academic performance
- ▶ Challenges pertaining to neurodivergence, physical and intellectual disabilities.
- ▶ Peer pressure
- ▶ Issues at home, parental pressure, parental neglect and abuse
- ▶ Bullying, harassment, abuse [whether physical, mental, emotional or sexual]
- ▶ Developmental and age-related issues of children.
- ▶ Confusion and challenges due to puberty, such as sexual curiosity, gender questioning etc.
- ▶ Friendship/romantic relationship issues
- ▶ Issues arising due to social media, involvement in cyber-crime, pornography etc.
- ▶ Falling prey to grooming, manipulation and exploitation.



Measures to prevent child victimisation

- ▶ Educate and train children on how to protect themselves from abuse.
- ▶ Spread awareness and train children on early identification and reporting of grooming behaviour.
- ▶ Emphasise 'no-touch policy' among peers and colleagues. Discourage any sort of physical touch with children, including patting, hugging etc.
- ▶ Encourage open communication between parents and children.

Identifying Vulnerable Children

- ▶ A child may not explicitly disclose their abuse or vulnerability, but may show signs related to their vulnerability.
- ▶ Sudden change in behaviour, being moody, socially withdrawn, or being emotionally erratic, crying, angry, aggressive, panic etc.
- ▶ Displaying demotivated attitude and suicidal tendencies.
- ▶ Impact on academic performance.
- ▶ Frequent absences from school or school-related activities.
- ▶ Reluctance of child to participate in activities or interact with a particular person.
- ▶ Displaying signs of physical or mental illness.
- ▶ Indulging in age-inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- ▶ Be alert to the signs and symptoms of child victimisation. Do not ignore the small signs.