

## 10 Principles for integrated child protection systems

**1. Every child is recognised, respected and protected as a rights holder, with non-negotiable rights to protection.** Every child is treated with dignity and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy, with due regard to the child's right to participation. There are measures to empower children to protect themselves and their peers and to claim their rights. Child-sensitive and accessible complaint and reporting mechanisms, including helplines and hotlines, are integrated in the system. Children are involved in decisions that concern them, including the development, monitoring and evaluation of child protection strategies, policies, programmes and services.

**2. No child is discriminated against.** *All* children have access to and benefit from national child protection systems on an equal basis.

**3. Child protection systems include prevention measures.** This may include the adoption of national legislation prohibiting all forms of violence against children in all settings, policy measures promoting child rights, awareness-raising and education for children, parents and society at large, proactive policy and outreach measures especially to discriminated against groups, parenting and family support, universal and targeted social services, integrated strategies to reduce child poverty, mechanisms for children to claim their rights, links with other policy areas, robust data collection.

**4. Families are supported in their role as primary caregiver.** The primary position of families in child caregiving and protection is recognised and supported through universal and targeted services, through every stage of intervention, particularly through prevention.

**5. Societies are aware and supportive of the child's right to freedom from all forms of violence.** There are concerted efforts to inform the public, including children, about children's rights and encouraging action to prevent violence against children, and to prevent the stigmatisation of child victims of violence.

**6. Child protection systems ensure adequate care<sup>1</sup>**

- **Professionals are committed and competent.** Professionals and practitioners working for and with children receive training and guidance on the rights of the child, on child protection law and procedures and more generally on child development. The necessary protocols and processes are in place to facilitate their role and responses to violence against children are inter- or multi-disciplinary.
- Information is shared on **certification and training** to promote trust, including cross-border.
- **Standards, indicators and tools and systems of monitoring and evaluation** are in place, under the auspices of a **national coordinating framework**. Systems are effectively regulated and independently monitored and accountable, ensuring accessible, quality, child-sensitive services and care for all children. The monitoring system guarantees unrestricted access to monitor the quality of services delivered, in particular for any form of institutional care.

---

<sup>1</sup> In line with international standards including the [UN Guidelines for the alternative care of children](#).

- **Within organisations working directly for and with children, child protection policies and reporting mechanisms are in place.** All agencies and service providers, civil society organisations, private associations, commercial or non-profit organisations, working directly with children have robust child protection policies<sup>2</sup>.

**7. Child protection systems have transnational and cross-border mechanisms in place:** In view of the increasing prevalence of children in cross-border situations in need of child protection measures, efforts are stepped up by: clarifying roles and responsibilities, keeping abreast of country of origin information, ensuring a national focal point for cross-border child protection matters, adopting procedures/guidance/protocols/processes, for example for the transfer of responsibility within the context of asylum procedures (Dublin Regulation), or when considering out of country care placements, or family tracing and protection in cases of child trafficking. However, for children seeking international protection or child victims of trafficking where contact could put the child and/or family at risk, caution should be exercised.

**8. The child has support and protection:** No child should be without the support and protection of a legal guardian or other recognised responsible adult or competent public body at any time. In view of the need for continuity of actions, the child protection system appoints a person of reference responsible for the child from reporting and referral through to follow-up and reintegration, to assure liaison among the different sectors and to guarantee a coherent and comprehensive response.

**9. Training on identification of risks** for children in potentially vulnerable situations is also delivered to teachers at all levels of the education system, social workers, medical doctors, nurses and other health professionals, psychologists, lawyers, judges, police, probation and prison officers, journalists, community workers, residential care givers, civil servants and public officials, asylum officers and traditional and religious leaders. Rules on reporting cases of violence against children are clearly defined and professionals who have reporting obligations are held accountable.

**10. There are safe, well-publicised, confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms in place:** Mechanisms are available for children, their representatives and others to report violence against children, including through the use of 24/7 helplines and hotlines.

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights\\_child/standards\\_child\\_protection\\_kcsc\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights_child/standards_child_protection_kcsc_en.pdf)