HELP FOR THE CHILD AND THE ADOLESCENT

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Organization: HELP FOR THE CHILD AND THE ADOLESCENT (HELP)
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Email: help.mko@gmail.com
Website: https://helpyou.gr/

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https://www.youtube.com/@helplesvosngo1850
Protocol No.: 07
Date: March 4, 2026

Legal Status

"Help" is a Non-Governmental, Non-Profit Social Solidarity Organization (Private Legal Entity - N.P.I.D.). It operates within the framework of the "Social and Solidarity Economy" as defined in paragraph 1 of Article 2 of Greek Law 4430/2016, representing the sum of economic activities based on the principles of democracy, equality, solidarity, cooperation, and respect for humans and the environment.

It has been active on the island of Lesvos since 2010, continuously providing services to children and adolescents from multi-problem families, as well as to their support systems. It is a recognized entity under decision No. 118/15-4-2011 of the Single-Member First-Instance Court of Mytilene and is registered in the Registry of Recognized Societies with registration number 1228/15-1-2011. Its Statute was amended by decision No. 47/2012 of the Single-Member First-Instance Court of Mytilene (registration number 1228/30-3-2012). Further amendments to the Statute were approved by Decree No. 2081/30-12-2025 of the Single-Member First-Instance Court of Mytilene, legally signed by the attending members of the General Assembly on 29/10/2025.

The organization is registered in:

1. The National Registry of Private Sector Non-Profit Social Care Entities (11114ΦΑΠ16006Ο12Ν 1183).
2. The Special Registry of Voluntary Non-Governmental Organizations (Article 12 of Law 2646/98 – 11114ΦΑΠ16006Ο12Ν 1067).
3. The Public Database of Civil Society Organizations (O.Koi.P.) of the Ministry of Interior (Protocol No. 5880/24-3-2025).
4. The National Registry of Private Non-Profit Entities with registration number 800006-2.

The organization is governed by a five-member (5) Board of Directors.

Objectives of HELP

The Association was established with the primary objective of supporting multi-problem families and addressing issues of child and adolescent abuse and neglect. Specifically:

- **Core Purpose:** To support individuals and families in crisis who, due to objective difficulties, cannot manage their situation.
- **Guiding Principles:** The objectives stem from the principles of equality, solidarity, and human rights, as articulated in the 54 articles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
- **Support Provisions:** Providing all forms of moral and material support to minors, regardless of nationality, who face issues such as malnutrition, inadequate clothing/footwear, school truancy, psychological or physical violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, parental loss, or dysfunctional family environments. It also covers minors at risk, abandoned youth, juvenile delinquency, and victims of substance abuse.

- **Parental Support:** Extending support to mothers (or fathers) facing psychological or physical abuse, or who are unable to protect themselves and their children due to crisis.
- **Complementary Role:** The character of HELP is complementary and auxiliary to State Social Services. As a voluntary Non-Governmental Organization, it possesses the operational flexibility to implement actions that state structures may struggle to provide due to administrative burdens, maintaining a dynamic network of mobilized volunteers.

Definitions

- **Child Protection:** The protection of children from violence, abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation, both within and outside the family environment. It promotes and safeguards child rights under the Constitution, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by Greek Law 2101/1992).
- **Physical Abuse:** The use of physical force against a child that results in, or has a high probability of resulting in, harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity. This includes physical punishment.
- **Neglect:** Chronic or isolated failure of a parent/caregiver to provide a child with essential development and welfare needs: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions.
- **Psychological/Emotional Abuse:** Isolated incidents or a continuous pattern of failure by a parent/caregiver to provide an emotionally supportive environment, utilizing practices harmful to the child's emotional health (humiliation, shifting blame, threats, and bullying).
- **Bullying:** Deliberately harmful and usually repeated behavior over time, where it is difficult for victims to defend themselves. It includes physical harm (hitting, stealing), verbal harm (racist/homophobic remarks, threats), and social/emotional exclusion.

Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework

A) Principle of Non-Discrimination

All staff, volunteers, and any natural or legal person associated with HELP are strictly required to demonstrate respect for every child, regardless of ethnic origin, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or social beliefs, or health status.

B) Safeguarding the Best Interests of the Child

The primary concern of all staff and volunteers is safeguarding the best interests of the child. Maintaining strict personal data confidentiality for every minor is mandatory. Children will be supported in their roles as active and responsible citizens through education, play, sports, and group participation.

Strict Prohibitions:

- Any form of abuse, neglect, or bullying of children is strictly forbidden.
- Corporal punishment or any behavior negatively impacting a child's self-esteem and trust is prohibited.
- Any physical contact that could be interpreted as sexual or provocative (e.g., prolonged hugs, sitting a child on one's lap) is strictly forbidden.
- Adults are prohibited from being alone with a minor in an enclosed space without supervision.

- The use of abusive language, mockery, discrimination, or public humiliation of a child is forbidden.
- Showing favoritism or offering personal gifts that create dependency relationships is prohibited.

Digital Communication & Social Media:

- Exchanging personal phone numbers/emails or adding minors as "friends" on personal social media profiles (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) is strictly prohibited.
- Taking or publishing photos/videos of minors without the written consent of their legal guardians and without serving the official purpose of the organization is prohibited.
- Exposing minors to pornographic or violent material on any device is strictly prohibited.

Professional Boundaries:

- Transporting minors to an employee's residence or hosting them outside official organizational facilities is forbidden.
- Any financial transactions with minors or their families (e.g., lending money) are prohibited.
- Smoking, alcohol consumption, or substance use in the presence of minors during activities is strictly prohibited.

C) Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (SEAH)

HELP maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (SEAH) directed at minor beneficiaries, as well as their parents or guardians. Any abuse of power, provision of material or moral aid in exchange for favors, or behavior undermining the dignity of beneficiaries is strictly prohibited. This policy binds staff, volunteers, external suppliers, partners, and subcontractors.

D) Creating a Safe and Protective Environment

All personnel must actively promote a climate of safety and well-being, integrating child protection into their daily duties.

Implementation and Compliance

The Board of Directors, Members of the General Assembly, staff, and volunteers bear the responsibility for implementing this policy. The policy is published on the organization's website (http://helpyou.gr) and distributed via email. All personnel must sign the "Declaration of Compliance and Acceptance of the Child Protection Policy," which is archived in a separate secure folder.

Risk Management and Periodic Review

HELP commits to conducting a written Risk Assessment prior to launching any new program or activity (e.g., events, field trips, digital campaigns) to prevent risks to child safety. This policy is a dynamic document and is mandatorily reviewed by the Board of Directors every 24 months, or extraordinarily when dictated by legislative changes.

Appointment of a Child Protection Officer

By decision of the Board of Directors, a Child Protection Officer is appointed with the following responsibilities:

- Monitoring the implementation of the child protection policy.
- Evaluating internal procedures regarding policy application.
- Conducting educational seminars on child protection to train personnel and stakeholders.
- Receiving and investigating reports falling under this policy and drafting findings/recommendations.

Safe Recruitment & Vetting Process

HELP applies strict security filters during hiring, volunteer selection, and contracting with external partners who come into contact with minors. The process mandatorily includes:

1. **Criminal Record Check:** Compulsory submission of an updated Criminal Record Copy (for General or Judicial use) to verify the absence of convictions for offenses against sexual freedom, sexual exploitation of minors, or any other offense against a minor (pursuant to Greek Law 4837/2021).
2. **Reference Checks:** Gathering and cross-referencing at least two (2) reference letters from previous employers, focusing on suitability for working with children.
3. **Structured Interview:** Conducting a personal interview with specialized questions evaluating the candidate's values, awareness, and readiness regarding child protection and crisis management.

Reporting and Complaint Mechanism

HELP treats every violation of this policy with utmost seriousness and priority. Anyone involved in HELP's programs must immediately notify the Child Protection Officer without delay. The mechanism operates under the principles of confidentiality, neutrality, impartiality, transparency, and accountability.

Submission Methods:

- Via email to: help.mko@gmail.com
- Via a printed complaint form, submitted in a sealed envelope to the Secretariat.
- Reports can be submitted anonymously. Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

Response Protocol and Timelines:

- **Initial Assessment (Within 24 hours):** The Officer reviews the credibility of the report and implements emergency measures for the immediate safety of the minor.
- **Internal Investigation (Within 5 working days):** A confidential file is compiled, gathering evidence and testimonies while maintaining absolute discretion.
- **Mandatory Referral to Authorities:** If the investigation yields reasonable suspicion or evidence of a criminal offense (abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation), the organization is required to transmit the file to competent prosecutorial authorities (Juvenile Prosecutor), police, or state social services within 24 hours of confirmation, in accordance with Greek and European law.

Sanctions and Consequences

- Violations of this policy by volunteers may lead to the immediate termination of cooperation with HELP.
- Violations by employees, or any deliberate concealment, falsification, or alteration of evidence regarding a complaint, will lead to disciplinary proceedings or termination of employment/service contracts.

ANNEX I

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF THE SOCIAL SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION "HELP FOR THE CHILD AND THE ADOLESCENT - HELP"

By the present, I, the undersigned ..... son/daughter of ..... and ....., hereby declare that I have read, understood, and fully agree with the content of the Child Protection Policy of the Organization "HELP for the child and the adolescent – HELP".

I understand that I bear sole responsibility, as an individual associated with the Organization, to comply with the terms contained in the aforementioned Policy and to avoid actions or behaviors that could violate it. I also understand that any potential violation or non-compliance with these rules may lead to disciplinary action, termination of my contract by the Organization, discontinuation of my voluntary work, or criminal prosecution against me.

Full Name: .....
Place: .....
Date: .....
Signature:

ANNEX II

INCIDENT REPORT / POLICY VIOLATION FORM

To: Child Protection Officer of the Social Solidarity Organization "HELP for the child and the adolescent- HELP"
Date of Submission: .....

1. REPORTER'S DETAILS (Optional, you may remain anonymous)

- **Full Name: .....**
- **Capacity/Role:**
  .....
- **Contact Info: .....**
  [1]

2. INCIDENT DETAILS

- **Date & Time of Incident:**
  .....
- **Involved Minor (if known):**
  .....
- **Person alleged to have violated the policy:**
  .....

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT

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.....
.....
.....
.....

4. TYPE OF VIOLATION (Select) [1]

- Physical abuse / Inappropriate contact
- Emotional / Verbal abuse
- Neglect
- Violation of digital safety rules (social media/photos)
- Other: .....

Signature: .....

The Objectives of the Association are:

The core purpose of "HELP" is to support individuals and families in crisis who, due to objective difficulties, are unable to manage the situation they are experiencing. These objectives stem from the principles of equality, solidarity, and human rights, as articulated in the 54 articles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The provision of all forms of support, both moral and material, to minors and adolescents, regardless of their nationality, who are undernourished, lack appropriate and adequate clothing and footwear, do not attend or poorly attend their school classes, face psychological and/or physical violence within their family or social environment, have fallen victim to sexual violence and exploitation, lack parents or are children of single-parent families whose family is dysfunctional or broken, are in obvious inability to survive or are at risk, are abandoned, or exhibit delinquent and aggressive behavior, or are victims of the use or abuse of addictive substances.

The extension of the provided assistance to the mother (or also the father), when she faces psychological or physical abuse from the same or another source of causes, or is unable to protect herself and her children, or faces any other nature of problems that render her unable to function as a mother.

HELP was distinguished and awarded in 2012 within the framework of the nationwide competition "Vodafone - World of Difference" for the proposal of the program "Supplementary Care".

Contact **Information**

Address: 9 Kyparission St., Mytilene
Tel.: 2251040323 & 6932328038
Website: helpyou.gr
Email: help.mko@gmail.com
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100082765761648
Youtube: HELP LESVOS NGO
https://www.youtube.com/@helplesvosngo1850
Website: https://helpyou.gr/

Social Solidarity Organization «HELP for the child and the adolescent»

Subject: Announcement of the Appointment of a Child Protection Officer

We hereby inform you that, pursuant to decision No. 363/05-03-2026 of the Board of Directors of the Entity "HELP for the child and the adolescent under the distinctive title HELP" and in full compliance with Article 5 of Law 4837/2021, the Child Protection Officer appointed for the Entity is Mr.:

- **Full Name:** Panagiotis Tsoukarellis
- **Capacity:** Social Worker, PhD in Sociology from the University of the Aegean, Scientific Director of the Entity

Contact Information:

- **Telephone:** 6932328038
- **E-mail:** ptsoukarellis@gmail.com / help.mko@gmail.com

Role and Duties:
The Child Protection Officer is the reference person for gathering and recording reports related to incidents of child abuse or neglect within the Entity and transmitting them to the competent authorities. The Child Protection Policy of the Entity is available to any interested party at the secretariat and on our official website.

Mytilene, 05/03/2026

On behalf of the Management of the Entity