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These guidelines serve as a basis for the development of concrete safeguarding concepts in international youth work. In this process, cooperation with international partners is essential in order to jointly develop and implement all agreements, rules and steps necessary to protect young people from sexualized violence.

For information, examples and assistance in developing safeguarding concepts, see www.schutzkonzepte.bjr.de

Bavarian Youth Council Guidelines for the Protection of Young People from Sexualized Violence

in International Youth Work

Protecting children and youths from sexualized violence is an important responsibility in our work with young people. The Bavarian Youth Council (Bayerischer Jugendring – BJR) strives to ensure that children and youths are protected from sexualized violence, assaults, and violations of their boundaries in all organizations, activities, and facilities engaging in youth work. This commitment also applies to youth work at the international level.

International youth work presents additional challenges when addressing these issues, for example as legal frameworks may differ between countries, and because of the need for coordination with international cooperation partners. In addition, unfamiliar situations in a foreign country may increase participants' vulnerability, for example due to language barriers, unfamiliar environments, absence of their usual guardians, or differing cultural perceptions of risks and necessary protection.

With these guidelines, the Bavarian Youth Council takes a position on safeguarding children and youths and advocates considerate ways of working with young people, respecting their boundaries.

The following guidelines apply to all international youth work activities under the responsibility of the BJR:

1.

All children and youths, irrespective of age, gender identity, disability, faith, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, or other characteristics, are entitled to protection from all forms of violence and abuse.

2.

Our work with young people in international cooperation is characterized by respect, appreciation, and trust. We respect the personality, individuality, and dignity of every young person.

3.

Together with our international partners, we are committed to developing and implementing tangible safeguarding measures in order to protect participants in international youth work from physical and psychological harm, violence, and abuse.

4.

We build transparent and positive relationships with young people. We recognize that perceptions of intimacy and distance may vary and address this in a responsible manner. We respect the individual boundaries of participants and protect their right to privacy.

5.

We actively take a stand against sexist, discriminatory and violent verbal or non-verbal behavior. We address and do not tolerate demeaning conduct or any form of violation of personal boundaries.

6.

We are vigilant and also take action in cases of sexualized peer violence, paying special attention to risks of sexualized violence associated with digital media.

7.

In cases of conflict, we seek professional assistance and inform those responsible. Safeguarding young people is our main concern.

8.

All persons working in international exchange programs occupy positions of particular trust, and abroad they may be the only reference persons available. We protect participants from exploitation in relationships of authority and dependency, as well as from abuse of power.

9.

We are aware that any sexual act involving persons under our care will result in appropriate disciplinary measures and, where applicable, in consequences under criminal law.