

Child Protection Policy

Project PEARLS

Chapter 1: Statement of Purpose

Project PEARLS mission is to “provide children of impoverished communities in the Philippines with the support they require – education, nutrition, health care and empowerment – to help themselves break free from poverty”. These children, who are living below poverty line and in extremely unhealthy environments, are most vulnerable to negligence and abuse. Often, they are the last ones to receive basic social services such as free access to education and healthcare. To ensure that their rights are protected and to give them an opportunity to develop their talents and potential, Project PEARLS aims to give them **Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love, and Smiles**.

Project PEARLS also aims to protect every child from any form of abuse, exploitation, neglect or any other form of violence. Any knowledge of any existence of alleged child abuse, Project PEARLS will immediately call Bantay Bata to gather information, validate and provide appropriate intervention for children. “Bantay Bata 163 is a child welfare program launched in 1997 to protect disadvantaged and at-risk children through a nationwide network of social services. It includes the rescue and rehabilitation of sick and abused children, training and advocacy on child abuse prevention, rehabilitation of families in crisis, educational scholarships, community outreach and medical and dental missions.” (source: <http://corporate.abs-cbn.com/lingkodkapamilya/bantay-bata/about>)

As an employer, Project PEARLS will conduct its own administrative inquiry (written) for its records if there is any staff (or volunteers) involved in any abuse. Any staff will be subjected to preventive suspension on the basis of alleged child abuse that is clearly a grave criminal offense when proven guilty. Project PEARLS will also coordinate and cooperate with the local barangay, police and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love, Smiles

The *Child and Youth Welfare Code of the Philippines* states that “the child is one of the most important assets of the nation” and that “every effort should be exerted to promote his / her welfare and enhance his / her opportunities for a useful and happy life”, Project PEARLS recognizes the importance of every child, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, and economic standing. In line with this principle, Project PEARLS vows to implement its mission “to feed, educate, advocate, and work for the basic human rights of Filipino children living in poverty, who have no voice and are almost invisible to society.

The purpose of this document is to define Project PEARLS' values and commitments to children. These will be the guiding principles in our projects, partnerships, and all work that we undertake.

Chapter 2: Application

The vision, mission, and values set forth in this policy shall be adhered to with full commitment by Project PEARLS' Board Members, staff, volunteers, partners, contractors, and sponsors (hereby referred to as "PEARLS representatives"). The PEARLS representatives agree to uphold and protect the rights of children at all times – whether within or outside of work associated with Project PEARLS.

Chapter 3: Core Values

In implementing its mission and vision, PEARLS representatives shall be guided by the following core values:

- *One Team.* Project PEARLS works as one team regardless of the race, color, sex, religion, age, and national origin of any PEARLS representatives or beneficiaries, and always works towards achieving the common goals and objectives of the organization.
- *Peace.* The organization promotes the right of the child "to grow up as a free individual, in an atmosphere of peace, understanding, tolerance, and universal brotherhood, and with the determination to contribute his / her share in the building of a better world." (Article 3, Section 12 of the Child and Youth Welfare Code of the Philippines)
- *Mutual Respect.* The organization does not hold any prejudice against any individual's religion, sex, age, or national origin. PEARLS representatives respect at all times any differences in beliefs or opinions as long as they do not conflict with the objectives of the organization.
- *Passion.* Above all, PEARLS representatives should be guided by a passion for what they do to serve the community and each other, and to help children break free from poverty.

Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love, Smiles

All members, volunteers, and stakeholders of Project PEARLS shall act according to the abovementioned values in the way they treat all other PEARLS representatives and beneficiaries.

Chapter 4: Commitments

Project PEARLS is committed to help impoverished children have a better life through Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love, and Smiles. The organization's main goal is to alleviate all instances of child poverty, primarily through the provision of scholarship grants and educational

resources. By giving children the opportunity to study, they have a greater chance of breaking the vicious cycle of poverty leading better lives. To achieve this goal, the organization is committed to undertake the following projects:

- **Scholarship Program** – through the help of private donors and partners, Project PEARLS funds the completion of school education for selected scholars.
- **Feeding Program and Brain-Booster Activities** – everyday, the organization feeds at least 300 children with a hearty and healthy breakfast. And on Saturdays, besides the feeding, the organization ignites their creativity and passion for learning through brain booster activities.
- **After School Program** – most of the children in the community that we serve spend their free time working or taking care of their siblings. Because of this, they stand a greater chance of being drawn in to drugs and crime, which inevitably leads to achieving lower school grades and can lead to them dropping out of school altogether. To prevent this Project PEARLS launched the After School Program, run every Sunday for the scholars of Helping Land. This program engages the children in activities that expand upon their learning, and prevents them from straying from the path to success.
- **Healthcare Program** – the families that Project PEARLS serve barely have enough money to buy food and other daily needs. Because of this, most of them do not receive regular medical attention. To help these families, Project PEARLS built a health clinic where children and their families can get free medical check-ups and medicines. The organization also conducts quarterly medical and dental missions in partnership with volunteer doctors, dentists, healthcare providers, organizations, and foundations. Financial assistance is also given to children who require immediate medical attention.
- **Celebrate with PEARLS Program** – many of the children in the communities we support have not experienced celebrating their own birthday. In line with the organization's mission desire to spread smiles, we will run a Birthday Program to give as many children as we can a wonderful experience which we all take for granted. Donors and supporters are also encouraged to share any of their life's special events with the children.

In addition to these programs, Project PEARLS is committed to be at the forefront of protecting and promoting the rights of every child, as stated in the "Child and Youth Welfare Code of the Philippines". The organization does not tolerate any kind of violation to the rights of the child or any thing that is detrimental to the growth and development of the child.

Chapter 5: Reporting

All PEARLS representatives are required to report any violation of the guidelines set forth in this policy, and acts that are against the law of the Philippines and United States.

Chapter 6: Amendment and Abolishment

The Board of Directors of Project PEARLS shall duly deliberate and decide any proposed amendment or abolishment of this policy.



PROJECT
PEARLS

Peace, Education, Aspiration, Respect, Love, Smiles

www.projectpearls.org