

POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN:

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

VII. Imagery, Internet & Mobile Phones



(Picture © Bahá'í World Centre)

OCTOBER 2010 (Updated July 2019)

Among the signs of moral downfall in the declining social order are the high incidence of violence within the family, the increase in degrading and cruel treatment of spouses and children, and the spread of sexual abuse. It is essential that the members of the [Bahá'í] community . . . take the utmost care not to be drawn into acceptance of such practices because of their prevalence. They must ever be mindful of their obligation to exemplify a new way of life distinguished by its respect for the dignity and rights of all people, by its exalted moral tone, and by its freedom from oppression and from all forms of abuse.¹

1. Universal House of Justice, 24 January 1993, to an individual believer quoted in *Antidotes to Domestic Violence* by Dr Michael Penn, an article in *The Bahá'í World: 2003-2004* (2005: page 148).

Guidance Regarding Internet Activities

In view of the increased use of the Internet by young people the National Spiritual Assembly feels it wise to share these guidelines. Unfortunately this is an area where those who prey on young people do operate. Also the technology is changing rapidly so this Appendix needs to be read in conjunction with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website (see weblink on page 5). While not wishing to stop Bahá'í participation we do feel the need for observing elementary precautions.

1 - Advice for children and young people on CHAT ROOMS

- Ⓜ Never tell anyone you meet on the Internet your home address, your telephone number or any other identifying information e.g. community name or youth group name, unless your parent/carer gives you permission.
- Ⓜ Never send anyone your picture, credit card or bank details, or anything else, without first checking with your parent/carer.
- Ⓜ Never give your password to ANYONE! (Even your best friend!)
- Ⓜ Never arrange to meet anyone in person without first agreeing it with your parent/carer or children's/youth leader, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.
- Ⓜ Never stay in a chat room or conference if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, and always report your concerns to your parent/carer or children's/youth leader.
- Ⓜ Check that any chat room you enter is regulated and run by a reputable company or organisation that monitors activity.
- Ⓜ Remember that Chat Rooms are public places and that you may not know the true identity of anyone you meet in a chat room. Many people "disguise" themselves in Chat Rooms, using a different name, even one of the opposite sex, giving a false age. etc. There are many cases of paedophiles masquerading as young people in Chat Rooms, getting to know youngsters and trying to set up meetings.
- Ⓜ Never respond to nasty, suggestive or rude e-mails or postings in Usenet Groups.
- Ⓜ Always be yourself and do not pretend to be anyone or anything you are not.
- Ⓜ Always remember if someone makes you an offer that seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Ⓜ When receiving e-mails delete attachments from strangers without opening them. They may contain viruses that can damage your computer. Make sure you know where files are from before you down-load them. They may also have viruses.
- Ⓜ Don't be surprised if your parents take an interest in what you are doing in the Chat Room, and do co-operate with them, they are acting for your protection.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) affects our use of images of children. This is because an image of a child is personal data for the purpose of the GDPR, and it is a requirement that consent is obtained from the parent/legal guardian of a child for any photographs or video recordings. It is important to consider the views of the child and as good practice educate the children about data privacy and what it means for them.

2 - Advice About Using Images of Children and Young People on Websites

The following is for those building/maintaining Bahá'í community and other Websites; Secretaries and others holding this document should make sure it is shared with them.

The times we live in make it necessary to exercise some caution when featuring information about children on Websites. Following this guidance should not affect your having a high-quality Website, one that will help attract people to the Faith.

DO:

- ® Seek parental permission and before including a photograph of a child or group of children. Seek the view of the child(ren). They must be aware that a photo or video is being taken and understand what the image is going to be used for.
- ® Use a group photograph in preference to that of an individual child.
- ® Ask yourself – “Can a child in this photograph be identified by a stranger, by their name or location?” – and if the answer is “Yes” don’t use that photo.

DON’T:

- ® Use pictures of children without seeking permission beforehand from the parent(s) and child(ren).
- ® Use pictures of individual children.
- ® Provide names, addresses, location information, personal details, etc., that could lead to a child being identified by a stranger.
- ® Give personal contact details that could lead to a stranger making contact with a child.

We believe that these sensible precautions will minimise risk of placing our young people at risk, while not interfering with your having a good Website.

3 - Sharing photographs and images on Facebook and social media accounts & the risks of sharing images online

Sharing photographs and images of children on social media or other online platforms carries potential risks. For example:

- children may become vulnerable to grooming if a photograph is shared alongside information that makes them identifiable. This includes: personal details; a tag with location information; visual details such as a school uniform
- inappropriate images of children may be shared online
- images may be copied, downloaded, screenshotted or shared by anyone
- images of children may be adapted and used inappropriately
- photos or videos may appear in internet search results
- depending on the terms and conditions of using an online platform, the image may be owned by the platform once it’s been posted. Platforms may then license images for use by third parties – such as for commercial purposes
- each photo or video, and any comments on them, become a part of a child’s public image. This may affect them later in life – for example, it may affect how they see themselves, or how they are viewed when applying for a job

(Thinkuknow 2018)

Before sharing images of children on social media, adults should consider how widely images may be shared, how long they may remain available and how this may affect the children’s long-term wellbeing. (NSPCC 2019)

At all Bahá’í events people should be asked by the organisers to be mindful of taking photos of children, other than their own, if they plan putting images on Facebook or other social media accounts and to always first seek the consent of the other child/ren’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s). There are many reasons for not sharing photos of other people’s children at Bahá’í events on an individual’s Facebook or

social media account without permission of the child's parent/legal guardian. It is very possible that a parent or legal guardian may not have given their consent for their child's image to appear in any publication, video or website for specific reasons and which could include child protection and safeguards around the child's image being recognised. An individual taking photos and sharing images of children at the event on Facebook or another social media will not or may not be party to the reasons.

Advice for Children and Young People using Mobile Phones

- ® Protect your information on your phone by putting a PIN lock on your mobile.
- ® You can't withhold a number when you send a text message from a mobile, so any text you send or receive can be traced.
- ® Text chat has the same kinds of risks as online chat services. People in chat rooms are sometimes not who they say they are, and friends you make online are still strangers.
- ® A photo can be forwarded to other people or posted on the Internet. So a picture you send to a small group of friends might be seen by millions of people worldwide.
- ® Tell an adult if you get a photo or a video that shows someone being hurt. Taking pictures or filming someone being attacked can be a very serious offence. It also can be illegal to send this sort of photo or video to another person.
- ® Make sure you never send offensive pictures or messages. It could get you into serious trouble.

Guidance regarding general images of children

Photographs and Images of Children in Periodicals & in Videos

- ® Where a photograph (or other picture) is to appear of a child who is named or easily identifiable then the Editor must have written permission from the parent or guardian beforehand.
- ® When a photograph (or other picture) is to appear of a small group (up to and including five) of children the same requirement applies for all of the children.
- ® Where it is the parent or guardian who has sent the picture to the Journal that will be taken as indicating consent for that child.
- ® It is the responsibility of the Editor to ensure that these permissions are kept in a permanent record.
- ® Caution should be exercised at all times about printing personal information about children.
- ® The requirements apply to children up to age 18 years.

Use of CDs to Record Images of School Events as a Memento and/or for Publicity Purposes

- The same protocols apply for CDs as filming and taking photographs
- 'Publicity purposes' also covers the CD being shown to family and friends of the parents and guardians for them to view school events and/or being shown to others.

Guidance regarding all images of children

The Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) summarises their guidance as follows:

Filming and Taking Photograph

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or filming prohibited but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/ carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

- ∞ It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.
- ∞ When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.
- ∞ Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.

(CCPAS is now known as thirtyone:eight - www.ccpas.co.uk)

Useful Links and Information:

❖ **CEOP: Child Exploitation and Online Protection:**

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

❖ **Thinkuknow**

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

Thinkuknow is the education programme from the National Crime Agency and Child Exploitation and Online Protection (NCA-CEOP), a UK organisation which protects children both online and offline:

❖ **NSPCC: National Society for the Protection of Children**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/photography-sharing-images-guidance/>

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**Specimen Form to use when Obtaining Parental Consent for
the Use of Images**

Consent form for [Name of Agency].....

To:

Name of parent/carer* (*person with parental responsibility)_____

Name of child: _____

Event the child attends:_____

Location of photograph: _____

{Agency/Organisation} would like to take photograph(s)/make a video/webcam recording of

_____ (name of child/ren).

These images may appear in our printed publications, on our website, or both. (Delete/add as appropriate).

To comply fully with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), permission must be granted by the parent/legal guardian before any images of your child/children are taken and used. Please answer questions 1 and 2 below, then sign and date the form where shown. Please return the completed form to:

To the parent (Delete as appropriate)

1. May we use your child's image in our printed promotional publications/videos/websites?
YES/NO

2. May we use your child's image on our website? YES/NO

3. Signed: (parent/adult with parental responsibility).....

Date: ____/____/____

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The Assembly also represents the Bahá'í communities of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands

Person Responsible:

I have checked and can confirm that the parents/legal guardians (and the child/children) are happy for their child/children's images to be used in the printed publications connected with this event or on its website or both and that they have seen the conditions of use:

YES/NO

Please note that websites can be seen throughout the world, and not just in the United Kingdom, where UK law applies.

I have read and understood the conditions for using these images as detailed below.

Signed (Person Responsible)

Date: ____/____/____

Print name

Conditions of use

- 1.This form is valid for (length of time in years) from the date of signing / *for this project only. Your consent will automatically expire after this time.
- 2.We will not re-use any images *after this time / *after the project is completed.
- 3.We will not include details or full names (which means first name and surname) of any person in an image on website, or in printed publications, without good reason and only with your express consent.
- 4.We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, or telephone or fax numbers on our website or in printed publications.
- 5.We may use group images with very general labels, such as "youth enjoying sport" or "making Christmas decorations".
- 6.We will only use images of pupils who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately e.g. we will not publish material from the youth group's swimming activity.

(*Please delete the option that does not apply.)

N.B. This form can be adapted to include video if required.