



# Centre drafts child protection policy

Posted at: 19/12/2018

## **Centre drafts child protection policy-Move comes in the wake of Muzaffarpur home case**

- A code of conduct for employees of all organisations and a declaration signed by them agreeing to ensure the safety of children are some of the provisions included in the Centre's draft national child protection policy, prepared on the prodding of the Supreme Court in the wake of the Muzaffarpur shelter abuse case.
- This will be the first policy dedicated to the protection of children, an area that until now was only a part of the broader National Child Policy, 2013.
- As per the draft, the policy will apply to "all institutions, and organisations (including corporate and media houses), government or private sector".

### **Recommendations of Bill**

- The draft policy recommends that all organisations must have a code of conduct based on "zero tolerance of child abuse and exploitation".
- It requires organisations to lay down that employees don't use language or behaviour that is "inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate".
- Institutions should also designate a staff member to ensure that procedures are in place to ensure the protection of children as well as to report any abuse.
- Any individual who suspects physical, sexual or emotional abuse must report it to the helpline number 1098, police or a child welfare committee.

### **Limitations**

- Unlike the National Child Policy, 2013, the latest document doesn't talk about children who may need special protection: including those affected by migration, communal or sectarian violence, children forced

into begging or in conflict with the law, and those infected with HIV/AIDS.

- It also doesn't talk about the role of the State for ensuring the protection of child rights or addressing local grievances.

The Hindu



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