You Are Safe Here

Child-friendly version of terre des hommes Germany Child Safeguarding Policy

You Are Safe Here

Child-friendly version of terre des hommes Germany Child Safeguarding Policy

Editor
Tanja Abubakar-Funkenberg

Text
Mini Shrinivasan

Illustration and design
Sandhya Radkar

Layout
Athanasios Melissis

terre des hommes Germany
Ruppenkampstr. 11a
D - 49084 Osnabrück
Phone +49 (0) 5 41 - 71 01-0
info@tdh.de
www.tdh.de

You Are Safe Here

Soni held her little brother Monu's hand and opened the gate. She peeped in. There were children everywhere. Reading, playing football, climbing a tree, drawing, fixing a swing, everyone was busy.

An older boy and girl walked up to her and smiled in a friendly way. They were Yusuf and Tara.

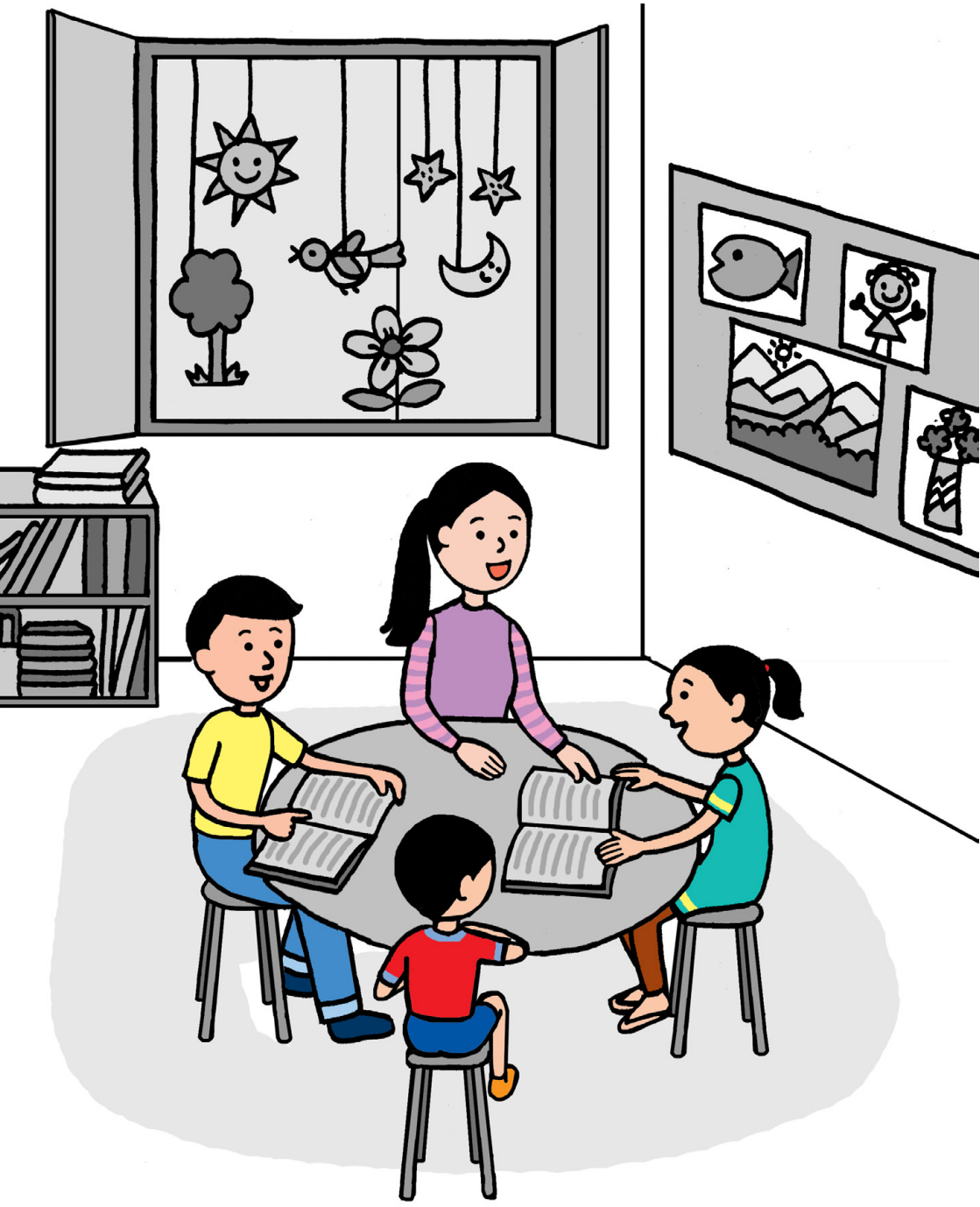
»Hey kid, are you new here? I haven't seen you before!« said the Yusuf.
»Yes,« said Soni softly. »We have come for the first time today.«
»You look scared!« said Tara, »You should not be. This is a safe place! No one can harm you here. We have a **Child Safeguarding Policy«**

What's that, I wonder, said Soni to herself. But she did not say it aloud.

»It means that no child can be harmed by anyone who works here, who visits our centre, or by anyone who comes to help out. And nothing that happens in our centre should be harmful to any child,« Yusuf told her.

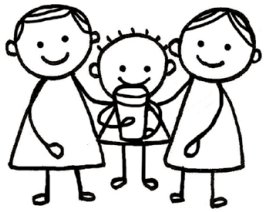
»You mean that is a RULE? It's written down?« Soni felt a little braver as she asked that.

And it was true! Her new friends showed her where all these rules were written down. Soni was so happy. In the factory where she worked before, she used to be beaten if she did not work hard. Now she had stopped working there and started school again. After school she came to the Children's Centre to play, and to get help with her homework. And at the Centre, it was actually written down that NOBODY could harm her. That was just super!

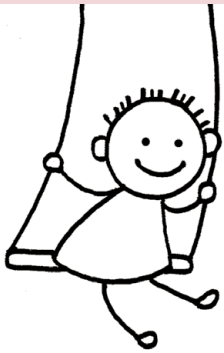


Like Soni, you too are safe because of such a book of rules. It is called the Child Safeguarding Policy.

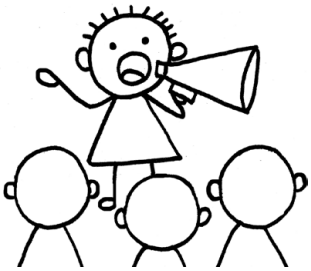
You know that you have rights. All children have rights. These rights are written down on a big paper, called the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. The grownups of your government have signed on this paper. This means they must make sure you get those rights. It's their job.



You have a right to live, to have a name and a family, to be healthy



You have a right to grow, learn, and play



You have a right to say what you think and feel, and to be heard.

And you have a right to be safe.

»What does ‘being safe’ mean?« Soni asked her new friends. This is what they told her.

Being safe means no one is allowed to beat you, or hurt you in other ways. But being safe means many other things as well

Being safe means no one is allowed to touch you or show you things in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

Being safe means no one is allowed to say hurtful things to you, laugh at you or insult you or make you feel bad about yourself. No one is allowed to threaten you or bully you.

Being safe means if you need something, an adult must help you to get it.

Being safe means no one is allowed to make you work so that you cannot go to school, play and grow well.

Being safe means no one is allowed to bully you or harm you or make you feel uncomfortable on the internet either!

»How do you know all this?« Soni asked the two older children. Then she wondered if they would think her very rude!

Yusuf and Tara laughed and showed her where it was all written down and how the workers and volunteers at the Children's Centre made sure that they kept children safe.

»Everyone who works here must always be kind and respectful to you, and never harm you in any way.«

When grown-ups start to work in a Centre for children or youth, the people who run the centre make sure that they are good people who support children and don‘t want to harm you. They find out from the police if these are good people who have not committed crimes against children.

When older children come to the Centre as volunteers, to help out or to play with you, they make sure that they are young people who have not done bad things and are going to be good and kind to you, not bullies and meanies!

And everyone who works at the Centre has to read the Child Safeguarding Policy (remember that?) and sign it, so that they promise to keep all the children safe.

There must always be at least two adults involved in all activities when children are participating.

The adults working at the Centre should not contact you for private reasons nor invite you to their homes.

And if you complain about any adult or older child not following these rules, then they must listen to you and do something about it at once.

Complain? How can I complain? Thought Soni. I am only a child!

You are probably thinking that too.

You CAN complain – to some other adult in the centre, or to your parents at home, or to your teacher in school or to any adult whom you trust and who is your friend. Or you can talk to the person called a Child Safeguarding Officer in the centre. This person's job is to make sure that you are heard and helped. At the end of the story (p.19) you will find their name, phone numbers and email address.

»Someone told me that the older children are going to the capital city by bus next week,« said Soni suddenly. »Will I be safe if I go?«

»Yes,« said the older girl, »There are rules about your safety when you go out too!«

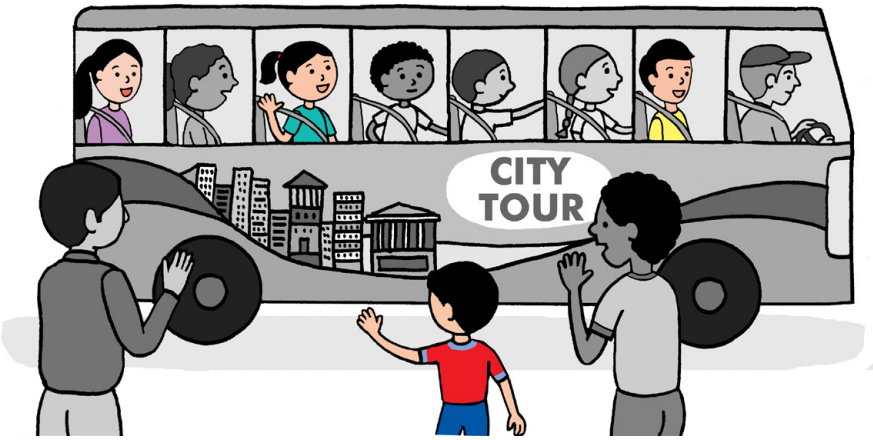
First of all, you can go on the trip only if you want to. No one can force you.

And if only a few children can go, then the adults must tell you why they have been chosen, and the children must agree. Or the children themselves can decide who is going.

Your parents or guardians should know where you are going and with whom and they need to agree to let you go.

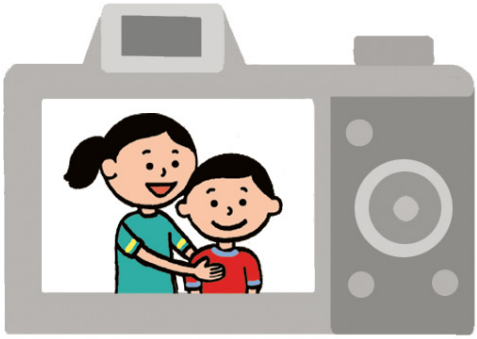
Wherever you go, and on the trip there and back, you should be looked after and kept safe.

Now Soni was really excited about the trip to the big city. She would leave her little brother at home with her grandma. She would go to the big city and see the tall buildings and so many different people and so many new things!



A man with a camera was standing in the door of the library as Soni and her new friends approached.

»Can I take a photo of the three of you?« he asked. Soni was too shy to answer, but her new friend said no, please ask our teacher first. She told Soni about the rules for being safe when someone wanted to take your picture or write about you in the newspaper.



They must ask you if it is ok to take your photo, and write about you. They must tell you where it is going to be printed or shown. And they will put your name with the photo or story only if you are ok with that. You can always say no if you don't like the idea.

Whew!! So many rules! Soni felt really good. She felt that in the Children's Centre, she and her little brother were going to be really safe with all these rules. She remembered the name of the rules. The Child Safeguarding Policy!

You have a right to be safe!

If you feel unsafe, or your friend feels unsafe, you can talk, phone or write to the Child Safeguarding Officer

Name:

Contact details

terre des hommes is a child rights organisation and has a child safeguarding policy:
www.tdh.de/wer-wir-sind/kindesschutz

All terre des hommes partner organisations follow the same child safeguarding standards. Some of them are reflected for children in this booklet.

Contact at terre des hommes head office for child safeguarding:
Tanja Funkenberg, t.funkenberg@tdh.de

terre des hommes
Help for Children in Need