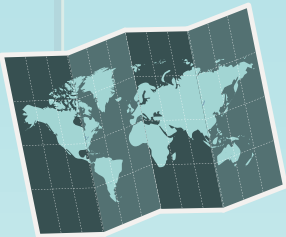




This project is funded by the European Union



PROTECTING CHILD RIGHTS IN THE TRAVEL SECTOR **TRAINING NOTES FOR AIRLINE PERSONNEL**



Prepared by: Nazlı Yıldırım Schierkolk

May 2019

International Children's Center

Bilkent Üniversitesi, Merkez Kampüs, Kütüphane Binası, 06800 Bilkent, Ankara
TURKEY

Tel : +90 312 290 23 66 Fax: +90 312 266 46 78

e-mail : bilgi@cocukdostuturizm.org

These training notes were prepared as part of the Project for Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism in Cooperation with the Private Sector that Respects the Rights of Children that is supported by the EU Delegation in Turkey to be used in internal training in the tourism sector.

Child-Friendly Tourism

Child Friendly Tourism is an approach that aims at establishing travel environments that are free from all forms of violence, healthy and safe, in keeping with the aim of protecting the rights of children in tourism and travel. In this context travel businesses should:

- Take precautions and offer services that will ensure the health, hygiene and safety of children in their vehicles;

Protect children from all forms of violence and sexual exploitation during travel;

Inform personnel and clients of child-friendly tourism;

Contribute forming social and environmental awareness focused on children.

Advantages of Protecting Child Rights in Travel for Airline Companies:

- Lowering of potential risks to do with organised crimes such as the sexual exploitation of children by businesses which have increased awareness in these fields,

Positive social perception, increased demand and positive media visibility through the publicity of child-friendly tourism with a good communications strategy,

Stronger cooperation and partnership with leading firms in the protection of child rights in the sector.



..... *These Training Notes are intended to inform airline company personnel about what they should do, should they come across or suspect the sexual abuse or exploitation of children.*

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children

One of the greatest risks for child-friendly tourism is the sexual abuse or exploitation of children on premises or means of transportation of travel companies. Sexual abuse is defined as any form of sexual activity that takes place between a child and an adult, or two children who are in a relationship of impropportionate responsibility, trust and power due to age or developmental differences. Sexual exploitation is the sexual use of children for any kind of gain including cash, goods, other material or other forms of gain (such as forcing children into prostitution, their use in pornography, sale for sexual purposes).

Those Carrying Out Abuse/Exploitation

- They are not only men and may be women. There is no typical age range or marital status for these people.
- They may come from any social, economic or cultural segment of the society.
- While they may not normally be sexually oriented towards children at the travel beginning, they may carry out abuse or exploitation if they find amenable
- Or they may be travelling for purposes of sexual exploitation or abuse.

Children Under Risk

- Lost or living in the street,
- Has been discriminated against due to race, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability,
- Refugee, alone (unaccompanied) children
- Has faced violence within his/her family or has been neglected by his/her family,
- Children who live in poverty in tourism regions and who do not have access to education are at greater risk.

Suspicious Circumstances

What Should be Done

People travelling with a child/children:

- Give as short answers as possible during registration/check-in
- Acting in a way that does not suggest relations to or guardianship of the child/children, not speaking the same language as the children,

Children:

- Are scared of and try to run away from police or security personnel at the airport,
- Are unaware of where they are travelling from or to or, on the contrary, answering questions in a way suggesting that they have been given or memorized the answers before,
- Wear clothing that is not suitable for the point of departure or arrival,
- Have their passports and all other travel documents in possession of accompanying people,
- Have bruises, scars or tattoos on their bodies,
- Appear to have been denied needs such as food, drink, sleep and basic healthcare.

Ground personnel:

- Should examine the passport and agreement document of the child carefully. According to the Directives on the Implementation of the Law 5682 on Passports, children travelling alone or with a third person other than their parents or legal custodian need to have a letter of consent from their parents or legal custodian that has been observed by a notary-public.
- If there are doubts as to the validity of the provided passports or required documents, the manager is alerted. If the manager feels it is required, he/she will alert customs police or other authorities at the airport of the situation.
- Even if there are no problems with the validity of passports, if there is a suspicion of sexual abuse due to the behaviour of the child/children, flight attendants are notified of the situation and asked to observe the adult and child/children.

Flight attendants:

- Greet the children as with all other passengers as they board and try to make eye contact with the children.
- Once passengers take their seats and all children are being distributed booklets/games etc. a short dialogue is held with children. If there are suspected child victims of abuse/exploitation, their reactions are noted.
- Observation continues during the flight and suspicions are noted along with passenger information. During all this, flight attendants should never confront suspected persons and should not intervene directly.

If reasonable suspicion is established as a result of observations, or an incident is witnessed, the pilot is alerted. The pilot reports the incident to the police through the control tower of the airport to be landed at. The police intervene as soon as the aircraft lands. Information that should be provided to the police are:

- Airline, flight number, location and time of arrival,
- Identity information of the suspected person,
- Suspected situation, observations, impressions,
- Information about personnel who witnessed an incident or suspect a case.

Communicating with Children in Cases of Abuse/Exploitation

- In cases involving children being subjected to violence or those that may require an emergency intervention, the staff member communicating with the child should introduce himself/herself and explain how they may help the child to instil trust. The staff member should take care not to give too much information about himself/herself and try to focus on the immediate needs of the child.
- Children who have been subjected to sexual exploitation (forced into prostitution, sold for sexual purposes) may not be comfortable around security forces. Nevertheless, promises that are impossible to keep (such as "Don't worry, your family will not know" or "I will not tell the police what happened") should not be made.
- Given the trauma the child has been through, he/she should not be made to recount the incident and not many questions should be asked about the incident. The testimony of the child will be received by the authorities.
- During the entire process, clear language that is appropriate to the age of the child and that he/she will understand should be used.
- During and after such incidents, children may experience mental confusion, intense anxiety, anger and surprise. These emotional states may cause children to react in a variety of ways (such as providing false information, an exaggerated account of what happened, avoiding communicating, acting aggressively etc.). It should not be forgotten that such reactions by the child are normal under the circumstances and the child should by no means be approached by dismissing what he/she has to say, judgementally, accusatorily or angrily.



..... For more information on subjects covered by these Training Notes, please visit the website www.cocukdosturizm.org

Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of International Children's Center and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union

