

**Child Protection Policy  
of the  
Vienna Business Agency.**

**A service offered by the city of Vienna.**

**Vienna**

**February 2025**

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## Introduction

Discover new professions, explore exciting inventions and expand your knowledge of socially relevant topics: the workshops offered by the Vienna Business Agency provide children from the third grade of primary school up to teenagers with many opportunities to broaden their horizons. In addition to school workshops, the Vienna Business Agency also offers a weekend program ('Wiener Erfindungen') for families.

As part of the "Wiener Forschungsfest", children and young people are invited to learn about research in Vienna in their free time through a hands-on exhibition and workshops. The weekend is rounded off by a school program that offers school classes the opportunity to explore selected topics in more detail in a workshop setting.

The people who use the Vienna Business Agency's offerings and spend a few hours exploring new topics are just as diverse as the agency's program itself. To ensure that all children and young people have a valuable workshop experience, the Vienna Business Agency is committed to consciously shaping and mindfully living together. Respect and appreciation are very important to the organization.

Therefore, the Vienna Business Agency follows these principles when interacting with its guests:

- Respectful treatment of students, teachers and other accompanying persons
- Gender-neutral language
- Equal participation
- Special motivation for girls
- Intercultural competence

These principles are an important part of the workshops and also form the basis of our child protection concept.

The Vienna Business Agency's child protection concept is therefore understood as supporting the implementation of these values and as a quality standard. The structure

and development of the child protection concept are based on the guidelines of the Child Protection Concepts Platform, which can be accessed at: [www.schutz-konzepte.at](http://www.schutz-konzepte.at).

## Organizational Analysis

An organizational analysis was carried out as part of the implementation of the child protection concept. To this end, the current status quo on the subject of child protection was surveyed and an analysis of potential risks was carried out.

The status quo analysis serves to survey and document all existing documents, structures, forms, processes, etc. that are relevant to a child protection concept and shows the current status of the Vienna Business Agency.

The careful risk analysis forms the basis for all subsequent measures. The risk analysis includes identifying, ranking and minimizing as well as managing potential hazards and opportunity structures relating to child protection through the activities of the Vienna Business Agency. All activities, from the recruitment process to structural conditions and educational measures (so-called vulnerable areas), were analyzed and conscientiously reviewed.

In order to maintain high quality standards, risks are continuously monitored, documented and addressed. The child protection concept is analyzed every three years and adjusted as necessary.

## Error culture

The basis for all decisions within error and complaint management is the welfare and protection of the child. With this in mind, the Vienna Business Agency creates the necessary framework to enable complaints of all kinds, but especially those relating to experiences of violence and boundary violations. The focus is therefore on a transparent and respectful error and complaint culture that is lived and supported at all levels and continuously reflected upon.

The Vienna Business Agency ensures that the feedback methods used are clearly communicated, visible and easy to find, and can be provided anonymously or personally. There are various options for providing feedback to the Vienna Business Agency, tailored to the target group (primarily children, young people, parents and teachers):

- At the end of each event, all participants have the opportunity to express complaints, wishes and suggestions. Written feedback is actively sought, especially for school workshops.
- Parents, young people, teachers and other affected parties can also contact the child protection officers at the Vienna Business Agency directly.
  - Elisabeth Karaca, [karaca@wirtschaftsagentur.at](mailto:karaca@wirtschaftsagentur.at)
  - Bernhard Melmer, [melmer@wirtschaftsagentur.at](mailto:melmer@wirtschaftsagentur.at)
- A list of additional contact points for children and young people is displayed in the workshop rooms of the Vienna Business Agency. In particular, reference is made to the Vienna Child and Youth Welfare Service hotline on +43 1 4000 8011.
- Information about the telephone hotline 'Rat auf Draht 147' is available on site, and teachers receive more detailed information about this hotline for children and young people during school workshops.

## Code of conduct

Our Code of Conduct is mandatory for the following target groups and must be confirmed by signing:

- „Explainer\*innen“ (mostly students who are responsible for running the workshops),
- Employees of the Vienna Business Agency who plan, organize and run workshops and other events for children and young people.

The aim of the Code of Conduct is to create a professional and personal protective framework for children and young people during the activities of the Vienna Business Agency.

## Code of conduct of the Vienna Business Agency on child protection

The Vienna Business Agency is committed to ensuring the well-being and protection of children and young people from abuse and mistreatment within its own organization and at events and workshops. To this end, preventive measures are being put in place to establish an attentive attitude towards children, young people and young adults while safeguarding their rights and minimizing the risk of violence and abuse.

The aim of the code of conduct for dealing with children and young people is to ensure that employees of the Vienna Business Agency take joint responsibility for the safety and protection of children.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this document, I undertake to

- Read and understand this child protection policy and actively implement it
- Be aware of how to deal with suspected cases (p. 16) and act accordingly
- Report relevant incidents (in accordance with the intervention plan) to the child protection officer as soon as possible.



With this in mind, I will

- Help to create a safe, supportive and encouraging environment for children
- Take children's opinions and concerns seriously
- Treat all children with respect
- Follow the 'two-adult rule' whenever possible (this means that two adults must always be present when working with a child or young person in a one-to-one setting, i.e. in a closed room. It is not permissible for one adult to be alone with a child or young person).
- Neither support nor tolerate unlawful, dangerous or abusive behaviour towards children and actively oppose it, provided that this does not jeopardise my own safety.
- Not abuse the power or influence conferred by my position on the life and well-being of a child.
- Not use physical violence.
- Not use inappropriate, indecent or abusive language.
- Not make sexual references or ambiguous gestures towards a child.

Date

Location

Signature

## Understanding forms of violence and abuse against children

A common understanding of certain terms facilitates employee awareness and clearer communication, which is particularly important in documentation, evaluation and feedback.

Definitions are based on those of the World Health Organization and the Protection Concepts platform.

### Forms of violence

- Physical violence

This refers to all attacks on a person's physical health. This form of violence is characterized by outwardly aggressive behavior that results in harm and/or injury to another person. Physical violence can lead to visible and invisible injuries (e.g. kicking and punching, slapping, etc.).

- Psychological violence

Psychological or emotional violence encompasses all forms of emotional harm and injury to a person. This form of violence is usually verbal. The perpetrator puts the victim under severe psychological pressure by threatening and/or insulting, ignoring, manipulating, etc. the victim, e.g. bullying, discrimination (appearance, religious affiliation, sexuality), blackmail, stalking, threats;

- Sexual violence

Sexual abuse or sexual violence is any sexual act performed on or in front of victims against their will or to which they cannot knowingly consent due to physical, emotional, mental or linguistic inferiority. The perpetrator exploits their position of power and authority to satisfy their own needs at the expense of the victim (e.g. touching their private parts, viewing pornographic images and videos together, forcing them to have sexual intercourse or masturbate).

- Neglect

This refers to the persistent or repeated failure of persons responsible for care to provide care. A distinction is made between emotional, cognitive, physical and medical neglect, as well as inadequate supervision.

In addition to the types of violence listed here, there is also the concept of boundary violation. This refers to the transgression or violation of 'perceived' boundaries that a person feels are protective and necessary. Boundary violations are therefore always very individual and can vary greatly. Every form of violence is also a boundary violation.

## Preventive measures

The Vienna Business Agency is aware that successful learning and a productive workshop or event can only take place if all participants feel comfortable. In order to create a safe environment for all children and young people during the workshops, the following preventive measures have been developed with the help of the above-mentioned risk analysis.

- Personnel
  - A current criminal record certificate in accordance with Section 10 (1) and a current criminal record certificate for child and youth welfare in accordance with Section 10 (1a) of the Criminal Records Act must be submitted before starting work. The Vienna Business Agency will issue you with a confirmation for this purpose, which is required before applying for the criminal record certificate. If you are a foreign national, a criminal record certificate from your country of nationality is also required.
  - During the interview, prospective explainers (persons who will be conducting the workshops) will be made aware of the Vienna Business Agency's child protection policy.
  - The applicant's attitude towards child protection is discussed and questions are asked about how they would deal with any form of violence.
  - All explainers must sign the above-mentioned code of conduct in order to carry out their work.
  - One key measure is the 'two-adult rule'. This means that two adults must always be present when working with a child or young person in a one-to-one setting, i.e. in a closed room. It is not permitted for one adult to be alone with the child or young person. This rule is emphasised in particular during the induction and training of explainers.
  - Information about the KSK is provided at any time.
- Trainings
  - New employees are also taught child protection-related knowledge (both organisational and technical) as part of their induction training.
- Premises

- The premises where the Vienna Business Agency workshops take place should enable safe working and learning conditions and at the same time be open and easily accessible.

The 'role models' (people who share their experiences of everyday working life during the workshops) are also informed about the child protection concept during the briefing.

## **The role of child protection officers (CPO)**

The child protection officers are responsible for internal child protection. In addition to implementing the child protection concept, they are the point of contact for children, young people, parents, teachers and employees in the event of complaints or concerns relating to internal child protection.

The KSB is responsible for implementing the child protection concept. In the event of time off in lieu, holiday, illness, termination of employment or assumption of a new role, as well as suspicion against one's own person, responsibility is transferred to the other KSB.

In this sense, at least two people always assume the role of the KSB team. The KSB team always works according to the dual control principle, and tasks can be divided internally based on the distribution of competencies. In the event of illness or vacation, additional members of the Technology Awareness team are called in to maintain the dual control principle.

## Our Child protection officers

Child Protection Officer: You are welcome to contact our internal child protection team if you feel you have been treated unfairly or uncomfortable at a workshop or event.

Child protection officers: Elisabeth Karaca und Bernhard Melmer

### Contact information:

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melmer@wirtschaftsagentur.at

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## **Dealing with suspected cases**

If, despite extensive preventive measures, suspected cases arise, these must neither be ignored nor accepted. In order to be prepared for this possibility and, above all, to give employees the confidence to act, the handling of possible suspected cases was also elaborated in the course of developing this child protection concept.

It is essential to remain calm and to protect the personal rights of alleged victims and suspects as much as possible at every stage of the process. Even rumors or premature accusations can cause harm to all parties involved.

The intervention plan provides guidelines for all parties involved and is intended to ensure certainty of action.



Intervention Plan					
Terms	Definitions	Measures			
Border violation	A minor boundary violation could be a disrespectful verbal comment or inappropriate touching (not involving sexual characteristics).	Take signals seriously	Addressing the persons affected and/or involved	If the case could not be resolved → notify CPO → individual case processing	
Suspicion	In cases of suspicion, there are signs, but they cannot be clearly identified. Children may exhibit conspicuous behaviour, make hints or unclear, ambiguous statements. Sometimes the suspicion is based solely on a 'strange gut feeling'. Or there may be more concrete suspicion based on clear signs that a child's welfare is at risk (clear and specific statements by the child, signs of injury, clear observations, film or image material, etc.).	Take signals seriously	Addressing the persons affected and/or involved	In any case: Notify CPO → individual case processing	CPO will report it to the relevant supervisory authorities and/or child and youth welfare services if necessary.
Concrete perception	There is a personal perception of a concrete, immediate danger to the child's welfare.	Intervene if possible and if there is no danger to yourself.	In any case: Notify CPO → individual case processing	<b>In case of imminent danger:</b> Notify child and youth services/the police	

IMPORTANT: Please remain calm in all cases and respect the personal rights of all parties involved as far as possible.

**The Vienna Business Agency consistently and immediately pursues any kind of child abuse, involving at least one child protection officer and/or the supervisor (multiple-eyes principle), while ensuring that the personal rights of all persons involved are protected to the greatest possible extent. If the suspicion is confirmed, the Vienna Business Agency consults external advisors and reports the case to external agencies (child and youth welfare services, etc.). The measures to be taken depend on the severity of the act of violence.**

## Publication, documentation and further development

The aim of monitoring and evaluating the child protection concept is to promote the implementation of the child protection concept and all associated measures, to continuously optimize them and to provide the Vienna Business Agency, as a learning organization, with input for its further development in terms of internal child protection.

The KSBs are responsible for monitoring, reporting and evaluation. The child protection officers exchange information on complaints and suspected cases and support the Vienna Business Agency in continuously improving its commitment to child protection.

Each case of KSB is documented using specified forms and filed in accordance with data protection regulations (for sensitive data). Transparency is ensured through documentation.

The further development of the KSK is also ensured by all persons working in this area through an annual written survey. Transparency is ensured through documentation.

The further development of the KSK is also ensured by all persons working in this area through an annual written survey.

The KSK will be adapted to new findings on an ongoing basis, if necessary, but will be updated at least every three years on the basis of documented monitoring and evaluation results. Changes to national (or international, e.g. through EU law) child protection standards will be considered and incorporated.

**Incidents and complaints are not only handled in accordance with the child protection concept, but also serve as part of the learning process.**

## Legal framework for child protection

The rights of children, adolescents and young adults, including their protection from all forms of violence, are enshrined in various conventions and laws at global, national and regional level, in particular in laws on protection from violence against children and adolescents.

The legal foundation and basis for political arguments regarding legally protected child protection is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It formally entered into force in Austria on 5 September 1992, but – like most international treaties – required domestic implementation in accordance with Article 50 of the Federal Constitutional Law.

This has been implemented in numerous regulations relating to the protection of children and young people. The following legal provisions are particularly relevant to the protection against violence in Austria and therefore to our child protection concept:

- Federal Constitutional Law on the Rights of Children of 20 January 2011. In particular, the right to a violence-free childhood (Art. 5), the right of the child to appropriate participation and consideration of their opinion in their own affairs, and the principle of the primacy of the child's welfare, which applies to the entire legal and social order (Art. 1), are enshrined in constitutional law.
- Other constitutional principles, particularly within the framework of the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights Section 137(2) ABGB, prohibition of violence; Section 138 ABGB, welfare of the child
- Law on the Protection of Minors (Vienna Youth Protection Act 2002 – WrJSchG 2002)
- Federal Child and Youth Welfare Act 2013 (B-KJHG 2013), in particular Section 37, Reporting obligation (notification in cases of suspected child endangerment)
- Vienna Child and Youth Welfare Act 2013 – WKJHG 2013
- Criminal Code, in particular criminal offences against life and limb (Special Part, Section 1), criminal offences against sexual integrity and

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