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Child protection concept Kita Edgar Berlin

Cooperation between our day care centre and
the Youth Welfare Office Pankow in child protection

"In addition to appropriate care, children need special protection. They have a right to protection from physical and mental violence, from abuse or neglect, cruel or degrading treatment and torture, from sexual abuse and economic exploitation."

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1. General

UNICEF is committed to bringing children more into the focus of society and enabling the realisation of their rights - the basis for this is the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). It grants every child the right to life, education and protection from violence - but also the right to be heard. Children's rights apply to every child in the world, regardless of gender or origin.

The Federal Child Protection Act ([Bundeskinderschutzgesetz BKiSchG](#)) - the Act to Strengthen the Active Protection of Children and Adolescents - aims to improve child protection in Germany, to advance prevention and intervention and to strengthen all actors.

prevention and intervention and to strengthen all actors who are committed to the well-being of children. The law promotes the establishment and expansion of networks of facilities and services of public and independent youth welfare for the coordination of procedures, the design and development of services in the field of child protection.

The Berlin Senate has also decided on an integrated concept for prevention, counselling, early detection, crisis intervention, timely provision of help and early support. The aim is to protect the well-being of children and to promote their physical, mental and emotional development.

development. Parents are to be supported in exercising their right to upbringing and their responsibility for upbringing through information, counselling and assistance.

Section 8a, paragraph 2 of the Eighth Book of the Social Code, which has been in force since October 2005

which has been in effect since October 2005, expands the obligations of the day care centres by transferring the clarification of a possible risk of child welfare endangerment from the hands of the specialised service for youth and social affairs to the day care centres.

2. Mission of KiTa Edgar Berlin

The protection of the child's well-being (psychological, mental and physical integrity) is an essential part of the daily educational work at KiTa Edgar Berlin.

As an independent youth welfare organisation, we consider the child protection mandate, the healthy development of children, and our task, the protection of children from psychological and physical injuries, to be self-evident.

Our support mission includes care, upbringing and education and refers to the social, emotional, physical and mental development of the child. In order to fulfil our family-supplementing and -supporting mission, our day care centres work closely together with the legal guardians. Furthermore, we see child protection as a task for society as a whole. This is done on the basis of binding cooperation agreements and reliable cooperation between all those involved in the network (paediatricians, youth welfare office, public health department, police, etc.).

Children need care and protection from all threats to their well-being. Parents are responsible for the care and upbringing of their children and must ensure that their basic rights are respected. As a day care centre, we also make an important contribution to the fulfilment of the family's supplementary mission through counselling, support and help with upbringing.

KiTa Edgar Berlin works preventively and tries to recognise and deal with all risks that can arise in the everyday lives of families at an early stage.

For this purpose, we are available to the families as reliable help and support.

2.1 Legal basis in the context of child welfare risks

GG Art. 6 Para. 2 Protection of the family "The care and upbringing of children is the natural right of parents and their primary duty".

BGB §1631 para. 2 - Right of the child " Children have a right to an upbringing free of violence. Physical punishment, psychological injuries and other degrading measures are inadmissible".

SGB VIII Child and Youth Welfare Act

Federal Child Protection Act

2.1.1 Basic principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Right to life and personal development
Right to equal treatment
Primacy of the best interests of the child
Respect for the opinion and will of the child

2.1.2 Individual rights of the child

Rights to care

Protection rights:

- Protection from physical and mental violence,
- Protection from maltreatment or neglect,
- Protection from cruel or degrading treatment and torture,
- Protection from sexual abuse and economic exploitation

Participation rights

3. Prevention measures

3.1 Children

3.1.1 Participation of children in the facility

We see our day care centre as a "nursery of democracy", where children gain their first experience of life in a community of people who are not related to each other. We want the children to learn what rights they have and what rules are involved in living together in the day care centre society. So we discuss all the rules with the children to make sure they understand why we do things the way we do. New rules are created and set together in the morning circle. For example, if there is room for improvement regarding a certain situation, we discuss this with the children and try to find a solution together on how things could be better in the future.

Example: For a while, the children brought toys from home every day. There were arguments, jealousy and tears. We sat down together and asked the children why there was fighting and what made them sad. Then we realised together that there are already enough toys in the day care centre and agreed to introduce a fixed toy day in the week on which only something from home may be brought. We also found that sharing can be fun and learned.

Those who absolutely do not want to share, however, put the toy in his/her locker.

In this way, we also discuss incidents that have taken place and are on our minds, or conflicts and their possible solutions. The children should have the opportunity to help develop rules with us. We have made the experience that when rules are understood, they are much more effectively supported by the children.

"Participation means sharing decisions that affect one's own life and the life of the community and finding solutions together" (Schröder 1995, p. 14).

We also discuss the formation of groups for our activities or the further course of the day together in the morning circle. Within this framework, wishes and needs can be expressed and integrated into the planning by the educators.

It is the task of the educators to always give up some of their power as adults, to flexibly redesign their own ideas and to encourage the children in their participation processes. For the pedagogical self-image of the educators in the Edgar day care centre, this means respecting the children's rights of self-determination, the right to freedom of expression, the right to be seen as an individual and the right to choose one's caregiver.

Since we also care for children under 3, we have to be particularly attentive here. Young children depend on us as their caregivers to perceive and respond to their needs and

signals with great attentiveness and empathy. Involving the youngest children means first and foremost sensitively responding to their basic needs. To this end, we have designed our premises in such a way that individual needs can be satisfied (withdrawal, sleeping, choice of play partners, choice of play).

3.1.2 Children's right to complain about personal matters

The children in the Edgar day-care centre should not be controlled by others, but should be allowed to help shape their development and life in the day-care centre according to their own pace and abilities. In addition to participation, this also includes the possibility to complain. "Only those who are allowed to complain are really involved in shaping things." (BAG 2015, P. 45)

We always try to have an open ear for complaints. Especially open discussion rounds in the morning circle, during meal times or during nap time with the waking children offer peace and time to deal with personal and critical statements of the children. Children depend on us adults to notice them, encourage them, trust them and take them seriously. We give the children the security of being able to express complaints without fearing negative consequences by maintaining an open attitude and encouraging them to always express criticism and wishes. Even in cases of suspected dissatisfaction, we enter into dialogue with the child concerned and involve the parents. Especially with the children under 3 years of age, it is important for us to inform the parents if a day has been marked by tears, anger, frustration or withdrawal.

3.2 Team and Team Culture

3.2.1 Team culture

A team culture is always developing, both unconsciously and actively shaped. In order to see the transgression of rules and to address this openly in order to protect children, there are agreements in Kita Edgar. By allowing the questioning of the behaviour of colleagues, but also of supervisors or trainers, we prevent secrecy. We see a culture of criticism as an essential part of the team culture.

For preventive child protection, it is important that we constantly question our attitude towards power, but also proximity and distance. A power imbalance always bears the risk of abuse of power, and thus a threat to the child's well-being. Dealing with power should therefore always be done in a reflective way and for this purpose we have developed a common attitude in the team towards dealing with power, which, however, must always be and to question them again and again. We see ourselves as supportive adults who are aware of their power. Our horizon of experience as adults is greater than that of the children. We use our knowledge of the world and its interrelationships to support the children in their development into self-determined personalities.

We try to answer their questions in a child-friendly way and let them share our knowledge. Nevertheless, we give them space to make decisions themselves, to solve conflicts independently and to do things on their own. We accompany, praise and encourage them, always try to take the appropriate amount of time and exercise patience. It is important that we always ask ourselves: How much power am I as an adult willing to give up in order to allow the children to participate? Where and when is it necessary in our eyes to exercise power? What does a democratic approach to power mean for us? How do I deal with it when a colleague abuses our consensus of power? (BAG 2015, P. 24)

Insert I - Understanding the use of power in the day care centre Edgar Berlin

What do we understand by power?

By being adults and physically and cognitively superior to the children, we are in a position that enables us to influence the children's behaviour and thinking and also to determine for them. We have the power to make decisions for the children.

Differences between power, force and coercion?

Power - I know that rain pants would be appropriate today as it is raining and decide for the child to do so, possibly trying to motivate them.

Force and coercion - The two are closely linked as coercion is a version of power. If the child does not want to put on the rain pants and I force him to do so (for example, by using my physical superiority and putting the rain pants on the child), I ignore the protest, override the child's boundaries and personal needs (self-determination).

Similar examples of coercion would be to keep putting the child down on the mattress where I think it should sleep, to violently put it in the car, although it signals to me that it would like to run to the playground today, to keep pushing it onto the chair at the dinner table or to hold it on my lap in the morning circle so that it participates like the others.

At KiTa Edgar Berlin, we reject any form of coercion.

Where or when do we exercise power? When is it necessary to exercise power?

Whenever we decide for the child. "Please be quiet, now please tidy up, put toys in the locker, put on slippers because (explanation)". Whenever we take children out of situations: "Clean up please, we want to wash our hands. Clean up please, we want to go outside". The more you let the children participate, for example in planning outings, daily routines, etc., the more power you give away.

We see it as appropriate to use power whenever the child is not able to make a decision on its own. For example, when we dress the U3 children in winter, we decide for the child what to wear (cap, scarf, tights, snowsuit, etc.) and help him or her to do so. Or in traffic, it is okay if we hold the child's hand tighter to protect them if they are restless on the road or

want to run freely. But we also use power by making sure that the rules in our day-care centre are observed. For example, if one child hits another or treats them unfairly in some other way, we use our power to call the people involved together and discuss the situation. Another example would be when we decide that a new activity will not start until the previous one (for example, modelling) has been cleaned up by the children.

In our opinion, children need clear boundaries. We discuss and decide on these limits together with the children, but if necessary we use our power to ensure these limits, which are repeatedly demanded by the children.

The day care centre is one of the first democratic institutions for children (besides the family), in which they first have to learn to participate, to take part in decisions, etc. We always have to be aware of the children's interests when we discuss them with them. Whenever we decide in the best interest of the child, power is justified. For example, when the children ask: "Do we have to wear rain pants today?", we look out the window with them and decide: "Yes, because it's raining and all wet outside, and so you won't get wet". Or: "Can I have another chocolate kiss?" We are so far ahead of the child cognitively that we know you get cavities from too much sweet stuff and say, "No, because... (explanation)."

But as soon as we decide that the child has to eat something and, although it clearly shows us that it doesn't want to, we open its mouth and feed it, it becomes a compulsion and a clear transgression of boundaries takes place.

Which situations can be solved differently? What does a democratic approach to power mean for us?

In the past, we noticed that for some children, especially the older ones, the nap became a constraint. They have made it clear to us that they no longer want to rest, that they no longer need the sleep and that lying still has become difficult for them. In the team we have discussed how to best respond to these children and have now divided the group into sleeping and waking children. From now on, the waking children are offered a quiet time in the second group room.

The meal situation was also dominated by us educators. We distributed the food on the plates and poured water for the children. In this way, we ignored the children's independence. In the team, we decided to give the children more freedom of choice by distributing the food in bowls on the tables and providing water in smaller jugs. This way, the children can fill up their own food and pour water.

Our democratic approach to power often takes place in the morning circle, where we decide on new rules together with the children, let them participate in planning the day/project and excursions, and decide on group formation together with the children. But also again and again during our pedagogical work, in the moments when the children give us feedback that they can also express their opinion on this and make us take a step back and look at the situation from a distance and reconsider it.

How much power do we want to give away? Putting children's participation in the foreground, exercising power consciously if at all possible. Our minimum consensus for power:

It is important for us to constantly reflect on our own attitude towards the use of power: "Did I act correctly in the situation? What kind of feeling do I have afterwards? Did I respond to the child enough or could I have taken more time? Did I get my way? Was that important to me?" Coercive situations should be discussed openly in the team.

We exercise power in order to provide children with a safe, meaningful structure in which they can always find support and refuge, but also develop individually and freely. We support children who are noticeably overwhelmed with decision-making by taking the decision away from them.

How do we deal with it when this consensus is not respected?

We try to always keep our eyes open, not to look away, to take our own gut feeling seriously, to maintain openness in the team, to address things and to reflect together.

Insertion II - Attitudes to closeness and distance in the Edgar Berlin day care centre

When closeness and distance are out of balance and a boundary violation by adults occurs, this can mean a threat to the child's well-being. We practice a professional approach to closeness and distance in the Edgar day care centre by forming loving bonds with the children on the one hand, but on the other hand we pay attention to mindful demarcation. This includes, first and foremost, being sensitive to the children's sensitivities and needs, and doing this in distinction to our own ("Is the child signalling to me that he or she wants to sit on my lap or do I feel the need to cuddle with the child?").

An example of this is the evolution of our sleep situation. More and more children expressed the need to stay awake, not to lie down with. The rest after lunch in the sleep situation has done all the educators good, offered space to relax and recover, in order to then go into the rest of the day invigorated. Nevertheless, we wanted to take seriously the children's wish for change, their changing needs, closely connected with their advancing age, and for this reason we have redesigned the midday quiet time. Now one teacher always offers quiet activities for the waking children in the second group room, while the others stay with the teachers in the sleeping situation. On the other hand, we also clearly express our limits: "I don't want you to hit my bottom. One child on my lap is enough, next time you may. I don't like it when you kiss me on the face, but I like to take you in my arms sometimes". In this way, we avoid violating boundaries and ignoring the needs of the other person.

3.2.2 Team participation

Each member of the team at KiTa Edgar has his or her own theoretical and practical background in terms of pedagogical quality work. Each professional also brings his or her own interests and strengths to the daily work, which are used collectively. For this reason, the perspectives of the professionals are extremely valuable and their participation in certain decision-making processes is essential. After all, the teaching staff are not only responsible for the implementation of the pedagogical concept, the Berlin Education Programme, but also for the pedagogical quality within the facility as a whole. Therefore, we also use the exchange in weekly team meetings to discuss framework conditions, daily routine, purchases and duty roster arrangements together. In addition, the professionals always have the opportunity to make appointments with the management or the pedagogical director at short notice if there is a need for discussion.

Furthermore, responsibilities have been distributed within the team so that one specialist always feels responsible for key topics such as fire protection, hygiene and safety, attends further training on the corresponding topic, keeps the other specialists up to date and, if necessary, points out to them that certain measures must be adhered to (e.g. in the case of used dressing material from the first aid kit, a note is made about it and it is replaced as quickly as possible to ensure that it is complete).

3.2.3 Complaint management for the team

Both participation opportunities and complaints procedures in child day care facilities should be available to the team, also in the sense of preventive child protection. If there is room for their own complaints, it is more likely that the educational staff will be able to deal openly and professionally with complaints and criticisms.

If team members are shown appreciation for their own work, it will be easier for them to accept complaints. This appreciation, in turn, consists of being heard as a team member, of being included and involved, and of being able to voice complaints themselves. The weekly team meeting at the Edgar day care centre also serves this purpose, as does the opportunity to hold discussions with the management and the pedagogical leadership.

Our complaint procedure consists of voicing the complaint in either the team meeting or in a two-eye conversation with the person concerned (e.g. educator-teacher, head educator, educator-trainee, trainee educator, etc.) in the office. During the discussion, a solution is found and recorded (documented in writing and signed by the participants). After a set period of time, the implementation of the solution is reflected upon together.

However, complaint management does not only include the possibility to formulate complaints oneself, but also to receive complaints. In our work with parents at the Edgar day care centre, we always encourage them to voice criticism and complaints - be it in door-to-door conversations, in explicitly agreed conversations, in the twice-yearly development discussions and at parents' evenings. In the run-up to the parents' evenings, we also give parents the opportunity to anonymously voice their criticism by means of a

letterbox on the information wall. In order to be able to handle a complaint well as the recipient, it is helpful to view it as "free innovation potential" (BAGE 2015, p. 50). Finally, every complaint has its justification and must be critically considered and factually pursued.

3.3 Parents

3.3.1 Involvement of parents

As educators in a day care centre, we are legally obliged to work together with parents and involve them in accordance with SGB VII §22a I. We take the parents and their competences seriously. To this end, we take the parents and their competences seriously. By taking a joint look at the child and exchanging views, preventive child protection is made possible. We always try to focus on the fact that parents are experts on their children, as their children communicate differently to them than to the educators in the day care centre. Treating each other with respect, taking parents' concerns and worries seriously and showing tolerance towards different lifestyles and family constellations, as well as offering educational support, are basic prerequisites for good cooperation and create a trusting space for participation. Within the framework of our regular development discussions, the parents' evenings and the possibility to arrange meetings in the office at any time, as well as through the parents' representatives, parents always have the opportunity to participate.

Nevertheless, we already make it clear in the interviews that our concept stands and that the participation of parents in the daily, weekly and monthly planning, in the pedagogical goals and our set of rules is only desired in absolutely exceptional cases.

Example: A mother expresses the wish to move the morning circle back by half an hour because she never makes it in time in the morning and her child often misses this morning ritual.

In this case, we explain to the mother that we will not change our daily routine for her individual case.

Ex: Parents tell us that their child should no longer sleep at noon because he or she no longer needs this rest period, furthermore feels uncomfortable in the dark sleeping room and goes to bed much too late in the evening with a nap.

In this case, we take the child's needs seriously, see the parents as an important mouthpiece (the child has told them something that he or she has not yet told us) and arrange for this child to belong to the group of watch children from now on.

Furthermore, we take care to work transparently in our day care centre and to let the parents participate in what we experience together with their children. For this purpose, weekly emails are sent out with photos and descriptions of the excursions, activities and projects that we do, and a large noticeboard is used with current information (handicraft results, pictures, photos, saying of the day, meal plan, weekly plan).

3.3.2 Complaint management for parents

Parental involvement also includes offering clear complaint procedures. Why is it important for parents to be able to voice criticism? Children quickly sense whether or not their parents stand behind the facility they attend. To avoid immaturity and passivity, we handle complaints professionally at Kita Edgar Berlin.

Our feedback culture naturally also includes critical feedback. Parents can contact the management with their concerns at any time by email or telephone, or they can contact the teachers verbally. Appointments are made in the office to discuss the issue in more detail.

Example: A mother asked for an appointment by phone because she had hoped for a place for her second child but could not be offered it on the desired date. She felt left out and not informed enough. We (management and administration) made an appointment with the mother, where she could tell us her worries and fears, but also her anger.

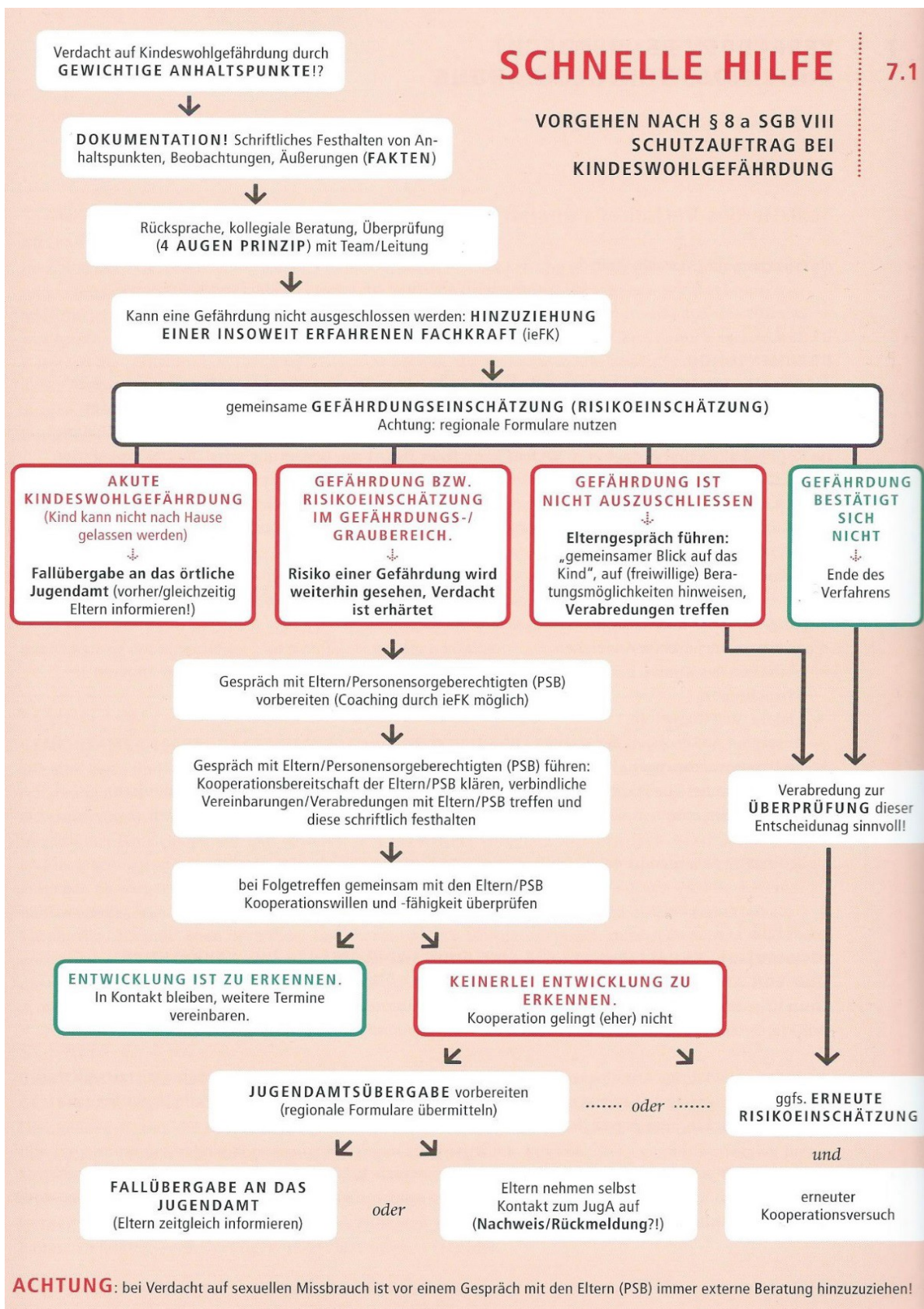
We then had the opportunity to explain our point of view and to agree together on a plan for the months to be bridged until the children settle in.

The satisfaction survey is carried out twice a year in the development meetings with the parents in order to evaluate it and discuss possible consequences.

Complaints from parents are discussed in the team and, if necessary, flow into the further development of the concept. A positive attitude towards criticism is helpful and must be trained again and again in order to then successfully implement the building blocks of our complaints procedure:

1. receiving the complaint
2. processing the complaint in the team or in cooperation with the parents
3. feedback to the parents
4. reviewing the solution

4. Procedures in case of suspicion of extra-institutional endangerment of children's well-being



Difficult family life situations, mental illness, emotional, physical or sexual violence can happen anywhere. Therefore, if there is a suspicion of any kind of child welfare risk in the family or in the environment of a child, action must be taken as quickly as possible for the sake of the child. Especially in smaller facilities with a personal atmosphere, such as the Kita Edgar, the expression of such a suspicion can put a strain on the personal relationship with the parents. Nevertheless, as a pedagogical professional it is absolutely necessary to put the friendly relationship with the parents in the background and the professional working relationship in the foreground. After all, child protection is a legal mandate that must be met responsibly.

In order to be able to act in the event of a suspected risk to the well-being of a child, appropriate steps according to SGB VIII §8a must be followed (see Fig. 1).

Step 1:

If there is a suspicion that a child's well-being is at risk, accurate documentation is essential. This can be the basis for discussions with colleagues and parents, but also with other institutions (e.g. youth welfare office, police, family court). In addition, detailed documentation proves that the facility has fulfilled its legal mandate. Both direct and indirect statements by the child, visible physical signs, the child's overall behaviour towards other children, parents or other adults, as well as the case worker's own actions (discussions, measures taken) should be documented in writing (no photos). Care must be taken to ensure that the documentation is factual and free of interpretation.

Example: In a morning drop-off situation, a specialist notices the smell of alcohol on the part of one of the parents. Since this could be a possible sign of a risk to the child's well-being, this observation must be noted by the specialist in any case and the date must be stated.

Step 2:

In the second step, (strong) indications of a risk to a child's well-being must be strictly separated from unspecific indications or personal interpretations.

Only on the basis of these (weighty) indications can a suspicion of a risk to the welfare of a child really be investigated.

If sexual abuse of a child is suspected, the parents should not be confronted hastily. First of all, an experienced specialist (ieFK) should be consulted.

If the above-mentioned observation occurs again, this can be a (strong) indication of a risk to the child's well-being and must be documented. The child in question should be explicitly included in the specialist's observation focus. Does he behave

differently than usual? Is his or her behaviour conspicuous in any way? Does the child report any special events or occurrences at home - e.g. in the morning circle, in conversations between the children, in play, in conversations with professionals?

Step 3:

In the third step, the documentation of the (weighty) clues already serves as a sound basis for the collegial exchange in the team. This exchange is always possible at Kita Edgar, be it in a one-on-one conversation with a colleague or in the weekly team meeting. Here, the observations made can be discussed promptly and checked for suspicion. If the suspicion is confirmed, it is helpful at this stage to name a case manager who will accompany the case if necessary and be the first contact person. If it is still not possible to exclude a risk to the child's well-being, an experienced specialist should be consulted.

For example, the specialist looks again specifically at her observations and documentation and filters them for (important) indications. With the help of these points, an exchange with another professional or an exchange in the team meeting is sought. Have the other professionals made similar observations? Do they notice any peculiarities in the behaviour of the child or the parents in question? If so, a professional is designated as the first contact person - possibly the reference teacher of the child in question.

If the suspicion is confirmed, an experienced specialist is consulted.

- Contact addresses can be found at the end of this section.

Step 4:

The experienced specialist (ieFK) has an advisory function in that she can make a recommendation which can be accepted or rejected by the case manager. In this case, she should document the decision and give professional reasons for it.

Step 5:

Now a risk assessment is carried out, whereby the specialist with insufficient experience also includes existing resources and risk factors in the counselling. The further procedure is discussed together, also with regard to whether the resources of the facility are sufficient to counteract a risk or whether other suitable help should be called in by the parents. The further procedure, in particular the discussion of the problem with the parents, as well as how to solve it, is also planned.

The specialist with in-depth experience shares her observations with the specialist responsible for the case and makes a risk assessment together with her. If the relationship with the parents in question has already been trusting and open in the past, the ieFK can, taking into account the resources of both the facility and the parents, prepare the specialist for the upcoming discussion with them in a supportive manner, for example:

Who should lead the discussion? Should another professional be present? How can the topic be addressed sensitively and sensitively? What reactions can occur from the parents? How can they be reacted to in a professional and supportive way? What agreement should be reached with the parents? How can the discussion be concluded in the most goal-oriented way possible?

Step 6:

In the following step, the discussion with the parents is sought in order to check their awareness of the problem and their agreement with it.

Possible existing resources of the parents (relatives, friends, other parents of the day care centre), but also of the institution, should also be considered here before both internal and external counselling offers are specified in a jointly developed help plan and finally changes of action and subsequent meetings are agreed upon.

If the parents are aware of the problem and cooperative, resources are now jointly identified that the parents can activate to support them. In addition, counselling services can be pointed out, such as addiction counselling centres, family counselling centres in the vicinity of the home or day care centre, etc. Finally, target agreements are made and (at least) one subsequent meeting with the parents is arranged.

Step 7:

At an agreed follow-up meeting, the parents' cooperation must then be checked. If there is a willingness to change and to implement agreements already made, a further counselling process is appropriate, as well as accompanying the parents in the implementation of recommendations or requirements of external counselling centres or the youth welfare office.

However, if the situation has not changed and no effort on the part of the parents is apparent, step 8 follows.

If the parents have already made use of the agreed services and taken advantage of appropriate counselling, this is emphasised positively and their cooperation is appreciated. The parents should continue to be accompanied and, if necessary,

supported.

If the parents are uncooperative and do not agree, so that a further risk to the child cannot be ruled out, the ieFK must be involved again.

Step 8:

The specialist with in-depth experience should now be called in again to carry out a new risk assessment. This forms the basis for further steps.

If behavioural problems are evident in the child, these are pointed out by the ieFK.

Step 9:

If the cooperation with the parents fails and no change is visible, the case is prepared for transfer to the Youth Welfare Office. Regional forms are needed for this (risk assessment forms), which are essential for the Youth Welfare Office to take action.

If the parents continue to be uncooperative, the case must be handed over to the responsible youth welfare office in Pankow.

- The required risk assessment forms can also be found at the end of this section.

Step 10:

If the case is transferred to the Youth Welfare Office in the last step, the parents of the child must be informed beforehand or at the same time.

The specialist in charge of the case makes sure by telephone that the competent office has received the transmitted data.

The parents must now also be informed at the latest when contacting the relevant Youth Welfare Office Pankow by telephone and in writing. The specialist in charge of the case will enquire by telephone whether the relevant data has also been received by the Youth Welfare Office.

5. Procedure in case of suspected endangerment of the welfare of children within the institution

A threat to children's well-being by staff members in institutions can cause great emotionality, consternation and uncertainty in the institution concerned. Crisis management is helpful in this case, as it is important to remain calm in the event of indications of child welfare risks by colleagues. During the entire procedure, it is not a matter of proving the guilt or innocence of a suspect, because that is a matter for the police or the public prosecutor's office. It is our task to substantiate or refute a suspicion and to decide whether it is justifiable to continue to employ the staff member in question, taking into account the best interests of the child.

If there are indications from the child itself, parents or staff members that the child's well-being is being endangered by staff members, the following steps must be taken:

Example: The teachers have gone to the playground with the children in the afternoon. When collecting the children, they forget to count and go back to the nursery. Two children are forgotten in the playground and brought to the nursery by a stranger.

Step 1:

As soon as the absence of the children has been established, all indications, perceptions and observations are documented by the educators.

Step 2:

The information is immediately passed on to the pedagogical management and the managing director.

Step 3:

The pedagogical leadership and management take over the risk assessment, if necessary with the involvement of an experienced specialist (ieFK).

The pedagogical leadership and management determine a clear violation of the duty of supervision.

Step 4:

If there are no indications of a risk to the welfare of the child, the procedure ends at this point.

If there are clear indications of a risk to the welfare of the child, an ieFK or other special counselling centres will be involved at the latest (see appendix), an in-depth examination will be carried out and the accused will be released from work (please do not arrange for the child to stay at home in order to protect the child), and the local youth welfare office will be informed.

If a risk to the child's well-being cannot be ruled out, an ieFK or special counselling centre will be involved at this point at the latest, the review of observations will be deepened, the accused(s) will be released and asked to also seek support through counselling or a lawyer.

The educators have violated their duty of supervision and significantly endangered the welfare of two children.

In this case, the pedagogical director and the management consult an ieFK for advice.

Step 5:

The in-depth assessment includes

- informing the parents of the children concerned and providing them with support and information about support services.
- hearing the accused (always in pairs, and taking minutes)

Involving the day care centre supervisor

- to hold individual discussions between staff and management in order to confirm or refute indications of a risk to the well-being of the child.
- Involve external counselling/ ieFK, if necessary initiate criminal law measures (involve legal advisors).

The pedagogical director and the management call a team meeting on the same day and inform the day care centre supervisor. In the team meeting, the educators comment on the incident and the indications of a risk to the welfare of the children are confirmed. The parents of the children concerned are informed about the incident by the educational supervisor. The teachers are given a verbal warning. Together, they discuss how this could have happened and what measures must be taken in the future to prevent this from happening again. The entire team meeting is recorded by the pedagogical director.

If the case has come to the attention of the media, a contact person is appointed to give out specific information in order to avoid speculation.

Step 6:

A summary assessment is written. In cases where there is a risk or it is unclear, decisions about further measures are made with legal support, a counselling offer is found for the team and all parents are informed (a parents' evening is called to offer space for exchange and to take up the parents' concerns, gladly with the help of Pro Familia or experts from the Child Protection Association).

If the summary assessment does not reveal any danger, it is part of the management's duty of care to rehabilitate the suspected employee(s).

The pedagogical management and the management inform all parents in a comprehensive e-mail about the incident and its consequences in order to prevent speculation. The relevant reference teachers of the children concerned hold talks with the respective parents in order to once again address all questions, fears and concerns of the parents.

6. Contact addresses

Pool of district child protection specialists with in-depth experience

Registration for counselling

0163 - 2498034 (Mon-Fri 09am-4pm; answering machine is switched on)

beratung.kwg@ba-pankow.berlin.de

Pankow Youth Welfare Office

Child Protection Coordinator Simone Matthe

030 - 90295 - 7809

simone.matthe@ba-pankow.berlin.de

Pankow Health Department

Child Protection Coordinator Marion Lieberenz

030 - 90295 - 2817

marion.lieberenz@ba-pankow.berlin.de

Crisis Service of the Youth Welfare Office Pankow

030 - 90295 - 5555 (Mon-Fri 08am – 6pm)

Berlin Hotline - Child Protection

030 - 61 00 66 (available 24 hours a day)

DaKS

Ms Ohl

030-700942510

Child in the Centre

Address: Maxstraße 3A, 13347 Berlin

Phone: 030 2828077

7. Sources

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Elterninitiativen BAGE e.V. (2015): Guide to Child Protection