



# Protocol for Press & Media

## Virtual and physical access to SOS Children's Villages programmes

At SOS Children's Villages, we are committed to improving life for the world's most vulnerable children. The urgency of children's situations compels us to work with the press and media to share their stories and images. Yet, telling such stories in the public sphere can also carry risks for the very children we mean to help. In the end, what we share and how we share it makes all the difference between doing good and doing harm to children. Please make sure to follow the [Guidelines for journalists reporting on children \(UNICEF\)](#).

We ask for you to be our partner to ensure that the children remain in a **safe, caring and protective environment**. Children in alternative care have often experienced past emotional and physical trauma. To safeguard their well-being, we ask members of the press and media to abide by the following guidelines:

- In all materials, we aim to ensure that the communication will **not cause harm or distress**.
- **Informed and specific consent** must be obtained for the use of materials collected for communications, fundraising, or other purpose. We strongly encourage **consulting with the children** who are subjects of the material, even if the consent is formally granted by a guardian or other authority.
- **Consent is purely voluntary. The parent/guardian always signs consent in their native language.** We never offer a reward or payment to a child, young person or family in exchange for information or images. **Individuals can withdraw their consent at any time, for whatever reason.**
- We use data and materials collected from an individual **only for the purpose(s) described in the consent**.
- We treat the subjects of our communications materials (the beneficiaries) as **co-creators of the content**.
- We take all appropriate steps to ensure that **children's privacy is protected**.
- **Secure channels and disposal.** Personal data must be stored and transferred through secure channels

### When interacting with children and families, please make sure to:

- Conduct **interviews with children, family members, and caregivers in the presence of an SOS Children's Villages staff member**.
- Do not ask children to speak about their past, background or other potentially embarrassing or **sensitive personal information** (e.g., traumatic experiences, health conditions, appearance, etc.). In crises, children are not to be interviewed.
- Make sure last names, addresses and **other personal data is not revealed in the content**. For children, please make sure a **changed first name** is used to protect their privacy.
- **Abide by local laws concerning showing the faces of children.**
- **Obtain permission before taking any photos or videos**, and respect the individual wishes of any child or co-worker who do not want to be photographed or featured in any kind of material.
- **Do not give out any personal contact details** (e.g., address, landline, mobile phone number, social media contacts, Skype, email address, etc.) to any child or their family. Do not ask for the contact details of the children or their families.
- **Show respect to the children and staff** and take any cultural sensitivities into consideration throughout all interactions.

**Please make sure to get in contact with the SOS Children's Villages national association** to arrange necessary documents and agreements before your visit an SOS Children's Villages programme (e.g. Work-made-for-hire-agreement, [Code of Conduct](#), Consent Forms)

Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ for any questions.

**Report your concerns.** If you want to raise a concern, please contact our Child Safeguarding team by using the [reporting form](#) on the international website. Thank you for keeping SOS Children's Villages a safe and caring environment.

Related Policies: [Child Protection Policy](#), [SOS Care Promise](#) | ©2022, SOS Children's Villages International