

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL PROJECT ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL RECOVERY AND SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF SEXUALLY ABUSED AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

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I.

Rationale

Child abuse, particularly, sexual abuse and exploitation is a growing phenomenon in our country. An analysis of the records of the Bantay Bata Hotline project of the Bureau on the number of incidence of sexual abuse and exploitation cases for a 3 year period indicated an average increase of 10% yearly. It is to be noted, however, that the figures involved in the analysis represent only those cases that are reported to DSWD. It is believed that a lot more is unreported considering that cases of this type are culturally viewed as "private in nature" and families would rather not report lest they will be subjected to social censure and public scrutiny. In addition, children victims may not report said incidences because of ignorance; fear of reprisals by the perpetrators and fear that parents will blame them. Notwithstanding, with the continuing advocacy and mass persuasion efforts, an increase in the number of cases is projected as more people will be encouraged to report.

Consequences of child sexual abuse and exploitation are both serious and long lasting. Studies show that children victims fail in achieving healthy relationships with their immediate family, lessens the chance in attaining a sense of personal worth, a feeling of acceptance and self respect which may lead to difficult deviant behavior. Finally, these effects will create not only physical but emotional and psychological scars that may last a lifetime.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is everyone's problem. It does not only affect the child but also the family and the society as a whole. The public must deal with the financial costs of legal process, placement in the institution for the abused child, or conviction of the perpetrator.

It is in the light of the adverse effects to the personality of the child and the general implications to society at large that prompted the BCYW to conceive of this project.

Moreover, the following are the legal basis for such a project:

1. RA 7610 also known as the Special Protection Act of Children Against Abuse and Exploitation which mandates the DSWD to formulate a comprehensive program against child abuse and exploitation within one year after its approval (June, 1993);
2. Executive Order 56 mandates the DSWD to take into its protective custody children who are sexually abused and exploited or the child prostitutes and to provide a comprehensive program for the child victims and their families.
3. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of which the Philippines is a State Party is to undertake appropriate measures to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse (Article 34).
4. The Philippine Plan of Action for Filipino Children towards the Year 2000 and Beyond contains as one of its

goals, the protection and rehabilitation of 70% reported abused and exploited children

II.

Description

The project seeks to address the needs of children and youths below 18 years old who are sexually abused and exploited (victims of prostitution, incest, pedophilia and rape), through the provision of special social services to help the client and his/her family cope with the trauma of the experience leading to his/her psycho-social recovery.

A. General Objective:

To provide protection and rehabilitation services to children victims of sexual abuse and exploitation for their early recovery.

B. Specific Objectives:

1. To assist the child and family to resolve their emotional responses to sexual abuse and exploitation
2. To secure medical, psychological/psychiatric and legal assistance, relative to child's social, emotional and physical needs arising from the experience.
3. To provide temporary shelter to children who can not remain in their own homes due to risk of further abuse
4. To provide livelihood opportunities that will eventually lead them to find gainful employment
5. To provide a venue where reports or referrals of child abuse cases are received and acted upon immediately at any time
6. To encourage and mobilize community groups to assume responsibility and be responsive to the needs of these children
7. To initiate conduct of action research program related to sexual abuse and exploitation

III.

Target Beneficiaries:

The project is nationwide in scope with a physical target of 2000 children and youth below 18 years old who are sexually abused and exploited

IV

Components:

A. Early Detection and Prevention - involves the conduct of activities aimed at forestalling the occurrence of sexual abuse and exploitation among children.

1. Advocacy, Networking and Social Mobilization

- a. Advocacy Activities such as submission of legislative agenda and position papers to Congress on issues related to sexual abuse and exploitation, working with the elite and policy/program managers for allocation of resources.
- b. Organization of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children - composed of barangay officials and representatives of the different sectors in the barangay to identify conditions that may lead to sexual abuse and exploitation and adopt measures to protect the rights and promote the welfare of children.
- c. Organization of Community Volunteers - development of a pool of community volunteers to assist in

identifying and reporting of a suspected victim of sexual abuse and exploitation

2. Information Dissemination Services - refer to activities which are aimed at raising the awareness of the public in protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of children.

a. Conduct of dialogues, meetings, seminars, assemblies or other fora focused on topics related to sexual abuse and exploitation

b. Installation of the Bantay Bata Hotline Project - broad scale public awareness campaign making use of radio, TV print media or tri-media and the community to promote the rights and welfare of children and encourage and facilitate the immediate reporting of a sexual abuse and exploitation case.

c. Production of communication aids such as posters, brochures, flyers, primers, video documentation to name a few.

B. Treatment and Rehabilitation Services - entail the provision of special social services designed to facilitate the psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. These are provided in either community or center based settings.

1. Protective Custody - refers to the immediate removal of the child from the home and the assumption of temporary parental authority over the child by the state.

a. If upon assessment, the child appears to be a risk of further abuse perpetrator is still around or has access to the child and parents have no capacity to protect the child from further abuse his/her immediate transfer from the home to a licensed foster family or duly accredited child caring institution shall be effected. Group Homes for Girls is an example of a center based facility established primarily to provide protective custody to children victims of sexual abuse and exploitation where they are provided rehabilitative services while working with their family in preparation for their eventual return to them or for other alternative parental care such as adoption or foster care.

b. Likewise, preparation of initial case study report and coordination with a legal officer for the filing of involuntary commitment of the child shall be done.

c. The Department shall ask the Court to suspend the parental authority of the parent or lawful guardian.

d. The child who is placed under protective custody should be referred to a government medical or health officer for a physical examination or medical treatment.

2. Psycho-social Interventions - refers to the specialized therapeutic approaches and techniques provided to children victims of sexual abuse and exploitation to help them cope with the trauma of the abuse and facilitate their recovery and rehabilitation.

a. Child and Family Counselling – refers to the provision of information, options, emotional support and opportunities to strengthen child-family relationships and coping capabilities and enable the family and child to reach a decision.

a.1. Counselling which may be individual or in groups, shall focus but not limited to the following:

a. 1.1. Enabling the family to identify causes of sexual abuse and exploitation

a.1.2. Enabling the family and child to deal/ cope with the stress brought about by the child's experience

a.1.3. Providing information as to specific action/service that can be done/extended to meet the various needs at various stages

- a. 1.4. Preparing the child and family to undergo the different procedures entailed such as medical examination, court hearings, preparing for temporary separation, etc.
- b. Therapeutic techniques refers to the conduct of appropriate treatment modalities which include but are not limited to the following:
 - b.1. art work
 - b.2. play therapy
 - b.3. psycho drama
 - b.4. music and movement therapy
 - b.5. puppetry
- c. Organization of Support Groups such as survivor groups or parents groups, etc to assist in the rehabilitation efforts.
- d. Psychological and Psychiatric Intervention - refers to test and other modes of assessment extended to the child to determine aptitudes, capacities, interests, to facilitate treatment in accordance with individual needs.
3. Medical Services - come in the form of medico-legal examinations, hospitalization and treatment for those affected with sexually transmitted diseases and for other medical needs.
4. Legal Services - Coordination with the Public Attorney's Office and other lawyer's organization like WILOCI to assist victim for free legal services in connection with the victim's pursuance of the case and coordination with NPS for litigation of perpetrator, termination of parental authority, etc.
5. Child Placement Services - refers to alternative placement care in the form of adoption and/ or foster care for children whose parents have been deprived permanently of parental authority by the state.
6. Livelihood Services and PSD - refer to the provision of skills training and grant of capital assistance to enable the child and family to engage in an income producing activity to alleviate their financial difficulties.
7. Provision of limited financial assistance to meet needs for food, clothing, footwear, transportation assistance, school supplies and emergency needs for medicines

C. Training and Research

1. The highly sensitive nature of sexual abuse and exploitation cases requires specialized skills in the management of cases thus the necessity for the conduct of skills enhancement of SWO IIs and other direct service implementor e.g. houseparents, police, prosecutors, heads of institutions, program developers and specialists, etc.
2. Conduct of regular staff development conferences to hone the skills of the direct service providers.
3. Conduct of researches related to sexual abuse and exploitation considering that there is a dearth of literature on the subject which is necessary in the development of understanding of the public on the issue of child sexual abuse and exploitation.
4. Installation of a Data Bank to serve as baseline data for the conduct of researches

D. Monitoring and Evaluation - To ensure that services provided are responsive to the needs of this distinct clientele, the following should be undertaken:

1. Conduct of Project Review and Evaluation Workshop

2. Conduct of Regular Program Audit

3. Submission of quarterly accomplishment report to include both Narrative and Financial Reports

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. DSWD - Bureau of Child and Youth Welfare

- a. Formulates project proposal and implementing guidelines on services for sexually abused and exploited children
- b. Provides technical assistance and shall provide the necessary funds for the implementation of the project as well as the conduct of training and research in coordination with other Bureaus/Units of DSWD
- c. Monitors and conducts regular evaluation/ audit to provide additional inputs for the project and determine its effectiveness
- d. Install a data bank as to profile of children, number of incidence, regional distribution and devise a reporting form to be used by the Field Offices for the purpose of evaluation and program enrichment and research.
- e. Initiates networking and linkages with other GOs and NGOs for resource generation purposes.
- f. Coordinates over-all implementation of the project.

2. DSWD - Field Office

- a. Field Office, in consultation with BCYW, shall assume full responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the project in the field office level
- b. Provides technical supervision over the staff directly involved in the over-all implementation of the project
- c. Shall supervise the judicious utilization of project funds
- d. Shall initiate at their level networking/ collaboration with other agencies to facilitate assistance to children and their families
- e. Shall submit reports to the Bureau on a quarterly basis re: implementation.

Social Welfare Officer II

1. Formulate social case study report indicating the diagnosis of the case and treatment plans to be implemented by the Interdisciplinary team (psychologist/ psychiatrist (if available), houseparents if in the center, etc.
2. Continuously evaluate and document the progress of the child/family vis a vis treatment plan in coordination with the interdisciplinary team
3. Work closely with the SWO III in the community for the provision of support services to the family if need be
4. Play an active role in the conduct of appropriate treatment modalities as play therapy, psycho-drama etc. in addition to casework and counselling sessions being conducted
5. Initiate the conduct of a regular case conference to discuss findings of the psychologists, the psychiatrist; her own findings, and other observations by other staff directly involved with children to come up with a comprehensive treatment plan.
6. Work with the clinical psychologist/psychiatrist in assessing the extent of psychological damage to the child brought about by the experience of abuse and exploitation. Specifically, the SWO II shall assess the social

functioning of the child.

7. Coordinates and link clients to other NGOs for other needs e.g. legal, medical etc.
8. Prepares clients for medical examination and attendance to court hearings.
9. Keeps a case folder for each child and observe confidentiality
10. Prepares and submit regular or special report

Psychologist

1. Conducts psychological testing and interprets result of test
2. Submits a report on the result of test and interaction with the child

Psychiatrist

1. Conducts other modes of assessment to determine mental state of victims and family members
2. Submits a report on the result of assessment conducted.

SWO III

1. Develops and formulates audit design and instrument
2. Conducts program audit to evaluate the effectiveness of the project
3. Interprets preliminary findings of program audit conducted and submits report of audit findings
4. Assist in the conduct of research related to sexual abuse and exploitation

Houseparents

1. Acts as surrogate parent to supervise and provide custodial care to the children
2. Coordinate with the rehabilitation team and other professional staff regarding the individual behavior of children under care
3. Maintains and prepares recording of homelife behavior and activities of resident children.

For compliance.

Adopted: 12 May 1994

(SGD.) CORAZON ALMA G. DE LEON
Secretary

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