



How to keep children safe as a volunteer responding to the Ukraine emergency

A child is anyone under 18. In case of doubt, a young person should be afforded the same consideration and rights as if s/he is a child.

This leaflet aims to help volunteers to:

- Have basic understanding/ awareness of the risks that children who are displaced from Ukraine can be experiencing
- Take actions to prevent children from experiencing harm or to raise concerns of children who may already be at risk of harm.

Principles of volunteering in humanitarian contexts

- Act honestly and ethically
- Respect the principle of non-discrimination
- Work to protect children
- Respect the dignity of those we work with
- Condemn all forms of child abuse
- Respect the environment

Children who are fleeing the war in Ukraine are likely to be experiencing psychosocial distress as a result of their displacement and witnessing war. Other risks facing children in times of war are: trafficking, being separated from parents and caregivers, sexual abuse and exploitation, being neglected and suffering physical and psychological violence.

Children's wellbeing and level of distress are also linked to the level of distress of their caregivers. Therefore, when wanting to help children, it is essential to help their caregivers. Advice for supporting caregivers is available [here](#).

> It is important for anyone volunteering to support displaced families from Ukraine to be aware of these risks and understand the actions they can take.

DOs and DON'Ts of volunteers



DOs:

- Treat children and families who are displaced with kindness.
- Show respect, empathy and care towards their emotional and physical needs.
- Listen to their real and urgent needs – those they consider urgent and a priority (not the ones that are urgent or a priority for you) and inform them about existing appropriate services.
- Inform yourself about existing services outside your team.
- Give adults basic information: access to shelter, use of a charged phone, police numbers.
- If you are in a situation where caregivers request voluntarily the separation from their child or children and ask you or someone else to take them with you, contact and refer the family to a child protection organisation.
- **Report anyone who you think is behaving inappropriately with children:**
 - If it is someone in your team, report it to your team leader
 - If it is someone outside your team, report it to the authorities (Child Helpline or Emergency services).



X DON'Ts:

- Do not separate a child from its parents or family group.
- Do not ever be alone with a child.
- Do not pick up or hold children if they do not want it.
- Do not take photos (unless they ask or allow you) and don't post pictures of children on social media without the child and parental consent. Do not depict children in a non-dignified or degrading way.
- Do not share any personal information of children or parents.
- Do not make promises you are not sure to be able to keep.
- Do not assume you know what children and caregivers need without asking first.
- Do not ask children and/or caregivers to tell you their stories or journey. If they start sharing their story voluntarily, do not ask details about what they have experienced to avoid risks of re-traumatization.
- Do not distribute infant formula, feeding bottles, teats and pacifiers. Improper use of baby products can result in illness or even death of the baby. If families are requesting baby food, please refer them to the person in charge.

If you come across a child who is alone:

- DO NOT assume the child is lost: the parent/caregiver may be close by. Ask the child and then people nearby if they know the child.
- Unless there is imminent danger, DO NOT move the child from the location you came across him/her.
- Remain in the place where you found the child, in case someone is looking for him/her.
- DO NOT promise the child that you will find his/her parents or caregiver.
- DO NOT leave the child on his/her own without an adult. If you need to leave the side of the child to look out for help, do not leave him/her with a person you do not know personally.
- As soon as possible, reach out to your national child helpline or emergency services and inform them about the situation of the child.

CONTACTS

EMERGENCY SERVICES* (all countries): 112

	Ukraine	Romania	Moldova	Hungary	Poland
Child Helpline*	116 111	119	116 111	116 111	116 111
Hotline for refugees*	0 800 307 711 0 800 505 501	+40 721 206 926	0 8000 15 27	0 800 504 546 06 80 310 310 +36 1 550 1828	+48 47 721 75 75
Ukrainian Embassy		+40 21 230 36 60 +40 21 230 36 68	+373 22 58 22 84 +373 22 58 21 51	+36 142 241 18	+48 22 621 39 79
Useful links	infohelpua.com life.pravda.com.ua/society/2022/03/4/247664/	dopomoha.ro/uk www.gov.ro/ro/ucraina-impuneuna-ajutam-mai-mult go.declic.ro/info-utile	dopomoga.gov.md help.chisinau.md	www.HelpUkraineNow.eu shelterukr.com help.budapest.hu www.supportukraine.hu	www.ua.gov.pl uasos.org

*Free services

Other resources can be found on the [Child Helpline International website](https://www.childhelplineinternational.org).

