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Project partners

The project team is composed of the **Association of Austrian Autonomous Women's Shelters, Verein AÖF** as project Coordinator (Austria), and the partners are **Psytel** (France), **Gesine** (Germany), **Conexus** (Spain), and the **European Family Justice Center Alliance, EFJCA** (Belgium/Netherlands).



safeshelter.aoef.at

Strengthening child safeguarding in women's shelters

What is SafeShelter?

SafeShelter is an EU co-funded project ensuring the development and implementation of child safeguarding guidelines designed specifically for women's shelters. The project runs from January 2021 until December 2022 in 6 European countries: Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Spain.

Goal & Vision

SafeShelter aims to provide capacity building on developing, implementing, and enforcing child safeguarding policies and frameworks for shelter and multisectoral staff working with children. SafeShelter's vision is for all women's shelters in the EU to have child safeguarding policies in place to improve the protection, safety and well-being of children during their stay in a shelter.



The photos are purchased and persons depicted are not associated with the topic of child safeguarding.

Child safeguarding in women’s shelters

Women’s shelters are one of the most crucial, specialised support services for women survivors of gender-based violence and their children. Children residing in shelters are witnesses of violence against their mothers, and over a half of them have also been emotionally, physically or sexually abused by the perpetrator, very often their father. Every child should live a life without harm and fear, no matter the age, gender, ethnicity, or religion.

What is a child safeguarding policy?

A child safeguarding policy in a women’s shelter describes how the specific shelter and staff will respond to any concerns related to child safety, in the best interest of the children, inside as well as outside of its premises.

The added value of child safeguarding policies

It is the task of every staff member in a women’s shelter to safeguard all staff, women and children and provide the right services to those who are not always able to protect themselves from abuse, harm, and neglect. Child safeguarding policies based on international standards allow women’s shelters excel their safeguarding competences and provide the safest environment possible for children affected by violence.

“The childcare worker was very friendly and fun. The time with her was very important for my daughter. Once a week she had time just with her alone. That was so special for my daughter” — Mother living in a shelter in Austria

SafeShelter activities include:

Child and Mother Advisory Panels

Child and Mother Advisory Panels are an integral part of a child-centered approach. We have obtained and integrated their feedback to ensure policies have children’s needs as their focus.

SafeShelter Guide

The SafeShelter Guide was created to assist shelter staff in designing high quality policies for their shelters. It is a reference document that can be used for guidance and it is available on our website in 4 languages: English, German, French and Spanish.

Training Videos

Training videos in four languages for women’s shelter staff and organisations working with children.

SafeShelter Workshops

Workshops for staff of women’s shelters and agencies working with children affected by violence are implemented in all partner countries.