



**Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2012-2015) "Growing with Children's Rights"
Good Practices and Initiatives**

Growing with Children's Rights

Ombudsman for Children of Republic of Srpska/B&H

Country(ies): Republic of Srpska/Bosnia and Herzegovina

Title of practice: Growing with children's rights

Main scope/theme:

- Child-friendly services and systems: child-friendly healthcare, child-friendly social services, family law and family policies, education
- Eliminating violence against children: sexual violence, corporal punishment, domestic violence, violence in schools, bullying, harassment and cyber bullying
- Children in vulnerable situations: children in alternative care, children with disabilities, children in detention, children 'on the move' (refugees, asylum-seeking, unaccompanied and separated, internally displaced and stateless children), Roma children
- Child participation

Managing organisation(s): Ombudsman for Children of Republic of Srpska/B&H, www.djeca.rs.ba, contact person: Nada Grahovac, phone: 00 387 51 222 420, info@djeca.rs.ba

Brief description: Based on the initiative of the Ombudsman for Children, competent Ministries (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport, Ministry of Internal Affairs) have signed the Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting. The Protocol prescribes mandatory standards and procedures for all competent bodies in case they are reported or if they learn in any other way that a child has been exposed to any form of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, cyber bullying, abuse, exploitation) or neglect (use of alcohol, beggary, abandoning school, etc.). Protocol obliges to maintaining appropriate records in different sectors, and the results of established records (databases) is the first Annual Report on different forms of violence, abuse and child neglecting that will be published this year.

Timeframe: Initiative for passing the Protocol was made by the Ombudsman for Children in July, 2012 and it was signed on November 20th, 2012 on the International Day of Children's Rights. The first Annual Report on Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting that will integrate data

from all competent ministries is expected this year. The application and monitoring of the Protocol is ongoing and it does not have time limitation.

Type of activities: In cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport, on November 19th, 2013 Round Table "Application of Protocol in Proceedings in Cases of Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting in Practice" was held in Banja Luka, Doboj, Bijeljina and Foca. Participants, representatives of centres for social work, police, schools, health institutions, local communities, non-government organisations and children shared their experiences and all have concluded that the Protocol has advanced the cooperation between competent institutions. During 2013, at the workshops "Do we know what violence is?" that the Ombudsman for Children implements every year, students from more than 30 schools were introduced to the Protocol and information on how and to whom violence can be reported. During school visits, meetings were held with schools' management on some practical applications of the Protocol and the need for raising children's awareness to report violence was emphasised. During the training seminar for young advisors of the Ombudsman for Children "Right to protection from violence and discrimination" in October 2013, the Institution spoke of violence in general, but it also put an accent on introducing the Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting to young advisors. As peer educators, young advisors shared acquired knowledge about forms of violence, its recognition and reporting through 43 workshops in 16 schools.

Results and outputs: The Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting is available in electronic form on the webpages of the Ombudsman for Children of Republic of Srpska, Ministry of Education and Culture, certain centres for social work, and some schools. The Ministry of Education and Culture has delivered an electronic version of the Protocol to all primary and secondary schools. The text of the Protocol has been published in the Official Gazette of Republic of Srpska, number 82/13. Right after it was signed, the Ombudsman for Children of Republic of Srpska has printed 2000 publications that contain the text of the Protocol.

Target group(s): Children and adolescents, parents, professionals working with children (protocol obliges all competent institutions and individuals to recognize and report cases of violence and to provide support for the victim and his/her family), decision makers

Success factor(s): The Protocol on Proceedings in Cases of Violence, Abuse and Child Neglecting promoted a new and enhanced cooperation among different institutions and their mutual child protection activities. It also has indicated the need for implementing prevention programs within the education system and educating employees about all subjects related to child protection. The initiative to promote programmes of prevention of different forms of violence, abuse and child neglect that are an integral part of school curriculum (so children could receive relevant information in their schools, from their earliest age and adapted to their needs and capabilities, about different forms of violence, its recognition, consequences on child's development, reporting, the right to assistance and support, etc.) is accepted, and, currently, there are ongoing activities on changing the schools' curriculums.

Estimated budget and human resources: This initiative did not have an assigned budget. All of the expenses were covered by the Institution's regular funds. Save the Children paid for the printing of the publications.