

# Overview



**THE ALLIANCE**  
FOR CHILD PROTECTION  
IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION



## Resources for Safe Spaces for Children in Humanitarian Settings

January 2019

# INTRODUCTION

---

Safe Spaces for children, including Child Friendly Spaces (CFS), are interventions used by humanitarian agencies to increase children’s access to safe environments and promote their psychosocial well-being. Some Safe Spaces may focus on informal education or other needs related to children. However, all try to provide a child-centered place where children can come together to play, relax, express themselves, feel supported, and learn skills to deal with the challenges they face.

Safe Space programming often addresses one or more of the following three specific objectives:

- a) Protection from risk;
- b) Promotion of psychosocial well-being; and/or
- c) Strengthening of community child protection capacities.

# RESOURCES

---

The following resources each cover psychosocial elements key to Safe Space programming and have detailed activities to support their implementation. They can also be used to complement and reinforce one another.

## International Rescue Committee

The International Rescue Committee’s **Safe Healing and Learning Space (SHLS)** provides a secure, caring, and predictable place where children and adolescents living in conflict and crisis settings can learn, develop, and be protected. The SHLS toolkit presents the SHLS approach and is an open source software on offer to the humanitarian community for a joint CP-Education intervention.

- SHLS approach is cross-cutting, and includes practical guidance, and adaptable tools to set up, monitor, and evaluate SHLS implementation. It also includes foundational training on well-being, child protection, pedagogy, and PFA.
- The SHLS toolkit has 4 core components: manager and facilitator handbook, SEL for children and a games bank, parenting support sessions, and math and reading curricula.
- Reading and math: detailed, 30-minute lesson plans for children 6-11 at the “emerging” level, for a total of 3 months of daily lessons.
- SEL: detailed SEL lessons plans to build social and emotional skills for children aged 6-11. These include structured 2-hour sessions focused on 5 core SEL skills: perseverance, conflict resolution, positive social skills, brain building, and emotion regulation. They are complemented with a games bank to develop these skills which children need to succeed in school and in life.
- Parenting skills: 12 interactive sessions to support stress management, positive parenting practices, and strategies for parents to support children and adolescents’ psychosocial needs.
- Important to note, that SHLS model addresses safety in the SHLS and in the home – it’s a two-pronged approach and this is critical.

- The components can be customized to the context, and the toolkit can be adapted to the needs on the ground. The SEL and parenting components form the core of the SHLS intervention and should always be used and adapted as needed. The reading and math should be used wherever there are no educational opportunities for children or where schools are struggling to meet children’s needs. However, they should never be used to replace a child’s attendance at school.

For more information and to view and download the SHLS toolkit visit: [SHLS.rescue.org](http://SHLS.rescue.org).

## Save the Children

Save the Children’s **Child Centered Spaces Toolkit** (forthcoming 2019) will be a user-friendly tool designed to support humanitarian programs in integration of services to meet the holistic needs of children and support in greater community participation.

The toolkit builds on existing Child Friendly Space initiatives, and will have clear tools, guidance, and references for integration with Education, Health, Nutrition, and WASH Sectors. Guidance will include how to incorporate Education into Safe Space programs, how to establish Mother-Baby Friendly Areas, Youth Friendly Spaces, and support for parents and other integrated approaches. The toolkit will have activity packs, training packs, and assist in adaptability to different contexts. It will hopefully also be complemented by a toolkit app for ease of use in the field.

## World Vision International and IFRC

World Vision International and the IFRC’s toolkit for **Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings** provides a set of materials to assist managers and facilitators/animators in setting up and implementing quality child friendly spaces based on global inter-agency standards, evidence, and on-the-ground experience from volunteers and staff.

A focus on community-based interventions is emphasized. The toolkit includes the following resources:

- Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings includes a set of seven themed workshops which relate to key aspects of children’s psychosocial well-being. These resources provide structured activities that can be either used in a sequence over a period of time or as standalone sessions.
- Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings addresses what a CFS is, how to safely set up a CFS, information for CFS facilitators/animators, and how to work with caregivers and community members.
- Training for Implementers of Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings is a 3-day training for CFS Managers and Coordinators. The training package draws on resources from the Operational Guidance and the Activity Catalogue.

These resources have at their core the protection of children from harm, the promotion of psychosocial well-being, and the engagement of community and caregiver capacities.

For more information and to view and download the toolkit visit <http://pscentre.org/topics/cfs/>

## COORDINATION

---

Alliance members are committed to coordinating tools on Safe Spaces programming to ensure coherence and complementarity and to avoid duplication. These tools are part of an ongoing interagency discussion around Safe Spaces, including CFS that includes the flexible use of space-based activities.

For more information about the tools, please see the above organization websites or contact the [Alliance](#).