

Your company can help protect children's rights.

Helping children is an easy way to improve your company's social sustainability and corporate responsibility profile.

Children around the world continue to be among those most affected by all forms of violence and social injustices.

The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees the right of every child to be free from all forms of abuse and exploitation. In spite of this:

- 2 million children are sexually exploited through prostitution and pornography.
- 1.2 million children are trafficked every year.
- 158 million children aged 5-14 are engaged in child labour.

It is clear that the protection of children cannot be assured by parents or the State alone: experience demonstrates that the involvement of the private sector is also necessary. **IBCR is calling upon Canadian corporations to take simple measures to protect children.**

Why should your company get involved in protecting children?

- Because there are clear links between business activity and children's rights.
- Because protecting and promoting children's rights builds a positive corporate image and can bring additional visibility.
- Because Canadian consumers are increasingly concerned about the social impact of business practices. Incorporating Children's Rights as part of your corporate profile is a good way to prove that your company is socially sustainable.
- Because IBCR is convinced that Canadian businesses can serve as innovative social responsibility examples.

The International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR) can assist your company in taking simple measures to protect children.

The IBCR already works with several companies in the travel and tourism industry on the issue of child sex tourism. However, it is not enough. IBCR wants to involve and assist other actors from the private sector in developing tools and strategies to protect children's rights in general.

If your company has employees traveling to or working in foreign countries, IBCR can work with you to create codes of conduct, monitoring and disciplinary mechanisms and guidance manuals defining how to prevent violations of children's rights.

Major corporations have already developed such tools:

- **Motorola Code of Business Conduct:** In several countries, children work in adult entertainment venues such as bars. This exposes children to serious risks of sexual abuse and exploitation. The clause below, coupled with staff training and reporting mechanism, could offer a safeguard:

“Entertainment that is lavish or frequent may appear to influence our independent judgment on behalf of Motorola. If an invitation seems inappropriate, we must turn down the offer or personally pay the true value of the entertainment ourselves. Accepting entertainment that may appear inappropriate should be discussed with management in advance.”

- **Xerox Code of Conduct:** “As a contractor to the U.S. government, Xerox is required by law to notify all employees who work with our federal customers of the government’s zero tolerance policy regarding human trafficking. Failure to respect this law and the principle of opposing human trafficking may result in Xerox being barred from work on government contracts and a disciplinary action up to and including termination for any policy violations. Contractors and contractor employees shall not:
 - Engage in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of performance of the contract;
 - Procure commercial sex acts during the period of performance of the contract; or
 - Use forced labor in the performance of the contract.”

Examples of other initiatives implemented by the private sector to protect children.

These companies and others like them have adopted policies and practices to prevent the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Your company can do the same.

- **Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development** has developed a Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.
- **Atlantica Hotels International (AHI)** in Brazil is the first large-scale hotel chain to adopt a social corporate *agenda* to prevent the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in tourism. AHI has created a Code of Conduct and a procedure manual outlining responsibilities and reporting procedures to be followed by each employee with different positions in their hotels (General Manager, receptionist, “bell boys”, housekeepers, etc.), in case they witness or suspect child sexual abuse.
- **Black’s Photography** in Canada has a policy to contact the police if employees find any film or pictures that contain child sexual abuse.
- **Air France**, on most of its flights, airs a video to inform passengers about the strict French laws against child sex tourism.
- **The Financial Coalition Against Child Pornography**, which includes banks, credit card companies, Internet Service Providers, and represents nearly 90% of the payment companies in the United States, track down abusers that are using their services and then shuts down the service.

Join Canadian and international companies in the fight against the exploitation of children. Together we can take action for a worthy cause and raise your company’s social profile.

To find out how your company can help protect children’s rights and improve its social sustainability and corporate responsibility profile, please contact:

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