

TEMPLATE CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose and Scope:

This policy sets out the commitments of _____ to child safeguarding. It refers to our individual and collective responsibility to prevent and respond to actions and omissions by our Representatives, whether deliberate or inadvertent, that place children that we serve at risk of any kind of harm, abuse, or exploitation. This policy is intended to cover all aspects of _____'s services and activities and applies to all _____ Representatives. _____ recognizes that certain individuals are at increased safeguarding risks, including children with disabilities, and we take additional care to ensure that we protect their rights.

Definitions:

- A. **Child or Children:** anyone under 18 years of age.
- B. **Child Abuse:** Anything which individuals, institutions, or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood. The main categories of child abuse are: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect/negligent treatment, and sexual abuse including exploitation.
- C. **Children with disabilities:** Children who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
- D. **Discrimination:** The treatment of one individual differently than another because of that individual's membership in, or affiliation with, a protected category, or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates.
- E. **Emotional abuse:** Harm to a child's emotional, intellectual, mental, or psychological development. This may occur as an isolated event or on an ongoing basis. Emotional abuse includes but is not limited to any humiliating or degrading treatment, failure to meet a child's emotional needs, and rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, isolating, or confining a child.
- F. **Neglect:** Failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs either deliberately or through negligence.
- G. **Physical abuse:** Non-accidental use of physical force that inadvertently or deliberately causes a risk of or actual injury or suffering to a child.
- H. **Representatives of _____:** Employees, volunteers, interns, consultants, Board members, partners and others who work with children on _____'s behalf, visit _____'s programs, or who have access to sensitive information about children in _____'s programs.
- I. **Sexual abuse:** The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. It includes all forms of sexual violence and coercion, sexual solicitation, manipulation, or trickery. Any sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is considered sexual abuse.
- J. **Sexual exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Policies:

- 1. _____ is committed to keeping children safe.
 - a. _____ is committed to operating in a manner that is safe for children and helps to protect the children that _____ serves.

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- b. Representatives are prohibited from engaging in an any activity that may result in any type of child abuse.
 - c. Representatives are expected to create and proactively maintain an environment that aims to prevent and deter any actions, deliberate or inadvertent, that place children at risk of any type of child abuse.
 - d. Any violations of this policy will be treated as a serious issue and will result in disciplinary action being taken.
 - e. The procedures below have been adopted to promote prevention, reporting, responding, and training.
2. _____ complies with all applicable laws and regulations.
 3. _____ prohibits sexual activity with children.
 - a. Any individual under the age of 18 is a child and is “underage,” regardless of the legal age of consent in the state in which the offense has occurred.
 - b. An underage child cannot legally give consent to engage in sexual activity.
 4. _____ management is committed to taking all appropriate corrective disciplinary, legal, or other actions in response to any violation of the Child Safeguarding Policy.
 5. _____ is committed to keeping confidential any sensitive information.
 - a. _____ has a duty to manage sensitive information in a manner that is respectful, professional, and compliant with applicable laws.
 - b. Representatives must keep all information about any suspected or reported incidents confidential and must follow the correct reporting procedures described below.

Procedures:

Preventing child safeguarding incidents

1. Where possible and practical, adhere to the “two-adult” rule, meaning there should always be present at least 2 adults during any activity where there are children present.
2. Representatives must never:
 - a. hit, physically assault or physically abuse children;
 - b. develop relationships with children that could in any way be abusive or exploitative;
 - c. act in any way that can be abusive or put children at risk of being abused;
 - d. use language, make suggestions, or offer advice to children that is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive;
 - e. behave in a way that is physically inappropriate or sexually suggestive;
 - f. stay alone with one or more children overnight at any _____ location;
 - g. sleep in the same bed or same room alone with a child being served by _____;
 - h. condone or participate in children’s behavior that is unsafe or illegal;
 - i. shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or act in any other form of emotional abuse;
 - j. discriminate against or show unfair treatment or favoritism to a particular child to the exclusion of others;
 - k. expose children to inappropriate images, films, or websites, including pornography and extreme violence;
 - l. place themselves in positions where they are made vulnerable to allegations of misconduct.

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Reporting

If a child is in danger or harm's way, call 911 or the local authorities immediately.

_____ is committed to giving primary consideration to the best interests of children and children's rights in all actions we take related to preventing and responding to safeguarding violations. Information concerning suspected or reported safeguarding incidents should be treated as confidential.

All _____ Representatives must report concerns, suspicions, and known violations of this Policy or its Procedures – no matter how trivial the issue may seem – within 24 hours of becoming aware of the concern. Reports may be made anonymously. Reporting pathways include:

- **NOTE: create a mechanism within your organization where Representatives can make anonymous reports. Appoint a management staff member to serve as the Child Safeguarding Focal Point.**
- **In person:** Speak with your supervisor or the Child Safeguarding Focal Point (ensure that Representatives are clear on who this is).
- **NOTE: if your organization receives any funds from Save the Children, all reports must also be made to Save the Children through one of the following methods:**
 - **By phone:** (844) 287-1892
 - **Online:** SavetheChildren.EthicsPoint.com
 - **By email:** safeguardingscus@savechildren.org or hotline@savechildren.org

Within 24 hours of receiving a report, the Child Safeguarding Focal Point will thoroughly document the details of the suspected conduct, including:

- a. date, time, and location of incident
- b. type of incident
- c. names of any Representatives who were involved in the incident

All safeguarding concerns, suspicions, and incidents as well as any potential violations of this Policy will be thoroughly examined and where needed, investigated by _____ (fill in who will serve as the **Child Safeguarding Focal Point**). Where a Representative leaves _____ prior to the commencement or completion of a safeguarding investigation and any subsequent disciplinary process, the process will continue, and a clear outcome will be recorded.

_____ has a zero-tolerance approach to Abuse, Exploitation, Human Trafficking, Harassment, and Discrimination against persons we serve by any of our Representatives. Failure to adhere to the requirements set out in this Policy is a serious disciplinary breach and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

CHILD SAFEGUARDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have been provided with and have reviewed _____'s Policy on Child Safeguarding. **I agree to comply with all aspects of the Policy, and I understand that my ongoing compliance with the Policy is a condition of my employment or volunteering with _____.**

This Child Safeguarding Acknowledgement shall have effect for a period of one (1) year from the date on which it has been signed as indicated below.

Please complete the following:

Signature: _____

Print Name CLEARLY: _____

Date Signed: _____

Minimum Operation Standards- Implementation Plan

	Key Element	Activities
1	Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Child Safeguarding Policy is in place. • The Policy has been conveyed to current staff, volunteers, and management and they have received appropriate training. • All staff and volunteers have Child Safeguarding included in their job description and sign the Acknowledgement upon hiring and each year thereafter.
2	Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are in place to receive written agreement from entities or individuals partnering with the shelter (contractors/suppliers) that they are aware of and will abide by the standards of the Child Safeguarding policy.
3	Engagement With Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter has posted signs raising awareness among guests around zero tolerance policy and complaint mechanism located [REDACTED].¹ • Shelter provides explanation of policy during Welcome Speech. • Shelter has visible complaint mechanism with a method for submission confidentiality or directly to Child Safeguarding focal point.
4	Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members are aware of their obligation to report misconduct and are aware that there is a policy for protection from retaliation in place. • Staff members are informed on a regular basis of how to file a complaint/report and the procedures for handling these.
5	Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated focal point has the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of Child Safeguarding policy and activities. That individual is [REDACTED]. • There is a mechanism for monitoring and review of the complaint mechanism. • Standard operating procedures or equivalent issued and used to guide response to a claim.