

# Global Children Care Incorporated's Child Protection Policy

For the purpose of this policy, a child will be considered to be a person under the age of 18 years.

## Statement of Responsibility

**In the adoption of Global ChildrenCare's International's Child Protection Policy, January 2003, Global Children of Australia affirms its commitment to the welfare of children and their protection from abuse and exploitation.**

Moreover Global ChildrenCareIncorporated upholds the UN Convention of the rights of the Child (1989) Article 19 which states:“ Parties shall protect the Child

**1) from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.”**

Global Children believes that child protection is both a corporate and an individual responsibility.

Every person who shares in the work of Global Children Care , including staff, volunteers, contractors, and supporters also shares in the responsibility to take every precaution to protect the children and families we serve.

Global Children Care will express its concern for the protection of children by developing policies, practices and guidelines that increase awareness of this issue, provide a framework for accountability at the corporate, departmental and individual level and seek opportunities for advocacy.

### 1. Action Statement

Global Children Care will provide Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse,  
and in doing so it makes the following commitment:

Global Children Care of Australia will:

- 1.1. Develop, implement and review guidelines and practices that support the protection of children; where Global Children CareIncorporated's specific guidelines do not exist, our policy and processes will be guided by the UN Convention of Rights International Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse;
- 1.2. Network with other Non-Government Organization and domestic agencies for the purpose of increasing awareness and support for the protection of children;
- 1.3. Develop and deliver staff awareness programs;

- 1.4. Screen and provide orientation information to all individuals and groups visiting Global Children Care projects, including but not limited to Staff, Volunteers, Board Members, Contractors, Sponsors, Benefactors, Donors and Celebrities;
- 1.5. Advocate for the protection of children from all forms of exploitation, especially sexual exploitation;
- 1.6. Be vigilant in protecting confidential information about children and their families in Global Children Care projects;
- 1.7. Demonstrate our responsibility to and respect for children by being sensitive in our communications that involve them.

## **2. Global Children Care Incorporated – A Child Safe Organization**

Global Children Care is seeking to promote a child safe culture that is open and dynamic where Staff both in Australia and in the field, donors and donor recipients have an experience of policy and procedures in action. The real strength of a child safe culture is the capacity and willingness of an organization and its staff to bring this policy to life through a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities, open communication and active participation.

## **3. Implementation**

Implementation of the policy involves, at the very least, informing staff and others of the document's existence. However the issue of Child Protection will be included in all induction sessions for new staff as scheduled by Human Resources. Managers are required to introduce the policy and to be responsible for adapting or developing the systems and processes necessary for operating it effectively in the future. The key requirements are that all staff and others are clear about their responsibilities to prevent abuse and have access to a detailed process by which they can raise concerns.

## **4. Child Abuse**

### **4.1. Definitions and terms**

Child abuse can be physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect or bullying.

#### **4.1.1. Physical abuse**

Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns, or fractures.

#### **4.1.2. Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child or young person.

#### 4.1.3. Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter and supervision to the extent that the child's health and development are at risk.

#### 4.2. Child Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is used by an older or bigger child, adolescent, or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification, or economic gain.

### 5. Global Children Care Incorporated 's Commitment as a Child Safe Organization

Global Children Care commits itself to a number of processes to ensure the safety of the children in its care. These are:

#### 5.1. Recruitment

Human Resources adheres by strict guidelines in the recruiting process of new staff, especially potential applicants who will be in direct contact with children overseas. The recruitment guidelines are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that they accurately reflect child safe recruiting and screening standards, including Behavioral interviewing. These guidelines reflect Global Children Care Incorporated's International Protocol and Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Child Abuse. Currently they include:

- Behavioral interviewing questions
- Pre-interview screening
- Conducting reference checks
- Conducting national police checks in the country of origin of the sponsor or volunteer
- or potential; staff person.

#### 5.2. Police Checks

All successful applicants for paid work will be asked to sign an Authority for a Police Check.

A Police Check will be requested for all full-time, part-time and casual employees including long-term contract appointments, regardless of where they conduct the practice of their position.

Volunteers with Global ChildrenCare Incorporated are required to consent to a Police Check.

Volunteers will be monitored by the Managers to whom they are assigned to ensure that proper processes are being maintained in relation to confidential information concerning Scholarship sponsored projects and Scholarship sponsored children. Where there are concerns. Managers must inform the Donor Partnering Executive/Child Protection Coordinator.

### **5.3. Training and Development**

Staff will be trained as appropriate and depending on their area of responsibility, for awareness of issues related to the protection of children from abuse and violation.

All staff will receive information relating to Global Children Care's Child Protection Policy during the induction process. Further training will be provided at a departmental level, tailored to the needs of the department.

The 'Child Protection Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers' will be made available to all staff visiting GCCI projects or working with Global Children Care in activities which include children.

All staff will be made aware of their individual responsibility to uphold the GCCI Child Protection Guidelines. Any member of staff who discovers or suspects abusive practices must refer the matter immediately and in confidence to the Child Protection Coordinator or Human Resources Executive and the relevant Group Executive, who will inform the Police.

Separate guidelines exist for arranging and reporting on Benefactor/Sponsor Visits to children in projects and are to be followed through with our Customer Service Centre.

### **5.4. Raising and reporting Concerns of child abuse**

In recognizing the worldwide problem of the sexual exploitation of children, Global Children Care Incorporated also accepts that steps must be taken to protect families from those adults who might seek to gain trust and access to young children through a development agency's own work. The possibility of staff, donors or partners abusing children is one that Global Children Care takes seriously, is committed to working to prevent, and takes all steps possible to stop abuse and hold accountable those who abuse children.

#### **5.4.1. Incident reporting**

Any incident, belief or suspicion of sexual or physical abuse (past or present) by a Global Children Care employee, sponsor, benefactor, donor, board-member or other partner must be reported immediately to the Donor Partnering Executive (Child Protection Coordinator), and Human Resources Executive at [admin@globalchildrenCare.org](mailto:admin@globalchildrenCare.org).

If a child reports an incident to you, the child/young person must be taken seriously and listened to carefully. At no time should the child be returned to the environment where the abuse occurred.

#### **5.4.2. Distance the alleged perpetrator**

The best interests of the child/young person may warrant the standing down of a staff member or volunteer while an investigation commences. If this course of action is being considered, the manager or Group Executive must first recommend this course of action in writing to the Human Resources Executive and the Director of Operations. Staff

members stood down receive full pay and are entitled to a just process that does not pre-suppose guilt or innocence. The allegations should not be discussed or communicated to other people until such have been considered and a decision made by management. The decision made should be documented and filed.

#### 5.4.3.Document the incident

As soon as possible (within a period of 24 hours of the disclosure), the staff member receiving the disclosure needs to have fully documented the allegation, including the time, place, witnesses.

#### 5.4.4.Confidentiality

All cases of child abuse, whether alleged or proven, will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. When concerns arise, all participants will be directed through a formal complaints process involving the Child Protection Coordinator and the Executive Human Resources.

### **5.5. Allegations made in Australia**

If the incident has occurred in Australia, the Child Protection Coordinator may contact the police, depending on the nature of the incident, to investigate the allegation.

#### 5.5.1.Reporting allegations of physical/sexual abuse to police

All allegations of physical or sexual assault as defined in this policy must be reported to the police, whether or not the victim has consented to the matter being reported.

#### 5.5.2.Family

The family of the child should be informed of the allegation and action proposed. They should be consulted where possible on the process to be followed.

### **5.6. Allegations made overseas**

If an allegation is made of a staff member, volunteer, donor or someone else representing Global Children`Care Inc from Australia , the following procedure will apply:

#### 5.6.1.Incident reporting

Any incident which involves an Australian staff member, international volunteer or donor must be reported to the National Director of that country, and the Donor Partnering Executive (Child Protection Coordinator) in Australia. Any matter so advised must be confirmed in writing.

The National Director of the country in which the allegation is made is responsible to liaise with Global Children Care Inc from Australia and follow its own legislative or internal procedures to investigate and address the allegations.

## **6. Supervision of staff working in the field**

Supervision of staff working in the field is important to ensure they are provided with support, guidance and to ensure accountability. The supervision of Australian or other International staff working in overseas settings should include a debriefing by their Manager on their return to Australia or their country of origin, including specific child protection related questions

Prior to commencing an overseas assignment, specific overseas managerial contacts should be agreed on. This Manager or Director in the national office will be accountable to monitor the Australian staff member and liaise with the Australian Manager in the event of an incident of concern.

The Australian Manager should then liaise directly with the Child Protection coordinator and the Human Resources Executive.

## **7. Sponsor Visits/Project Visits**

In order to ensure all reasonable precautions are taken to protect sponsored children, their families and communities from persons who may wish to exploit them, all sponsor visits, without exception, will be arranged through the Customer Service Centre.

Upon receiving a Program Scholarship Sponsor Enquiry/Welcome Pack, all sponsors will be provided with information around procedures relating to visits to the field. Upon receiving an inquiry to visit a Program Scholarship for a group of sponsored child, the Customer Service representative will provide the sponsor with information which outlines Sponsor Visit procedures including reinforcing Global Children Care's commitment to the protection of children. Refer to the attachment (entitled GCCI Program I Sponsor Visits available from the Customer Service Centre through our Administration Department ).

Upon receiving a confirmation of interest to visit a sponsored Scholarship group of children, the Customer Service Centre Representative will ensure compliance with all visit requirements, including the necessary forms to enable a complete police background report to be completed, prior to confirming the visit.

Global ChildrenCare Incorporated has the right to refuse or cancel a sponsor visit if the background report is not provided, or if it contains information that would disqualify the sponsor from visiting the child. In the event a sponsor visit is cancelled for the above reasons, the regional or field office should be contacted as the sponsor may still attempt to visit the child or arrive at the National Office unannounced.

While visiting projects, visitors must be accompanied by a Global Children Care staff person at all times. Under no circumstances should a visitor be allowed to visit a child's home or spend time with the children unsupervised.

Inappropriate or otherwise suspicious behavior on the part of the visitor toward any child must be addressed immediately. The GCCI staff member accompanying the visitor will seek the assistance of their superior and follow the guidelines

established by the local National Office, and the GCCI Child Protection Guidelines (GCCIPG), in relation to its child protection practices.

Unauthorized visits are when a sponsor visits the sponsored programs community directly, or arrives at the National Office, requesting access to the children without the required approvals having been gained.

The partner office will be expected to manage the sponsor according to the guidelines established in the (GCCIPG) and the protocols established. Please refer to Global Children Care Sponsored Program Visits Procedure Manual available from the Customer Service Centre.

## **8. Privacy and Confidentiality – Staff**

Personal information related to the children of Global Children Care sponsored programs should only be utilized in the course of normal employment and should not be shared with an unauthorized person(s). Staff are required to refer and adhere to Global Children Care's Privacy and Confidentiality policies to ensure that the privacy of children is protected.

## **9. Child Information Security**

Global ChildrenCare will take every reasonable precaution to protect child information and picture folders from falling into the hands of individuals who do not share GCCI's commitment to the protection of children. Global ChildrenCare will maintain its picture folders and child information in a secure environment as is practicable and every caution will be exercised to ensure security.

## **10. Use of Child Photos and Information**

Pictures, images, or other likenesses of children and/or information related to children that could compromise their care and protection will not be made available through any form of communication media without proper protection and understanding of their use. Moreover, any images of children should not be accompanied by detailed information relating to their place of residence. Images with corresponding text which may identify a child should be pixellated or removed.