

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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| **Policy Owner** | Director |
| **Compliance** | Mandatory |
| **Approved by** | Director |
| **Document** | Policy and Procedure |
| **Effective Date** | January 2019 |
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| **Contact** | Director |

1. **WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO**

This policy applies to BFO and its subsidiaries, its directors, officers and employees worldwide (**"Employees"**) and any contractors, donors, or other third parties (**"NGO Partners"**) engaged to provide services on behalf of BFO.

The Policy is based on internationally accepted best practice guidelines and applies in all jurisdictions where BFO does business. The Policy must be adhered to in all BFO business dealings and transactions in all countries in which BFO, our Employees and NGO Partners operate. It applies to all transactions with domestic or foreign government / public officials and transactions with private companies or persons.

All of BFO’'s Employees and NGO Partners are individually responsible for complying with the Policy and any breach may lead to disciplinary action, dismissal or termination of contract.

The Policy will be communicated to all Employees within BFO and its subsidiaries, as well as relevant NGO Partners and Donors

2. **THE BFO CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

We will safeguard children, young people, and other vulnerable beneficiaries by:

* Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
* Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
* Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
* Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
* Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
* Reviewing our policy annually and reflecting on any reports made, reviewing the effectiveness of the reporting process every quarter.

3. **DEFINITIONS**

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Physical Abuse** is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse** is a persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interactions.

**Sexual Abuse** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious Impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
* Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
* Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
* It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs

4. **PROCEDURES**

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS MADE BY A CHILD OF SUSPECTED ABUSE:

1. Get verbal account of incident from child
2. Record concern on incident report form
3. Report and present incident report form to Director, Belinda Marshall
4. Director contacts guardian of child if not already present and if appropriate

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER:

1. Record concern on incident report form
2. Report and present incident report form to Director, Belinda Marshall
3. Suspicious behaviour or conduct will be addressed within 72 hours of the issue being identified.
4. The BFO Advisory Committee will be notified of the situation for an opportunity to assess the incident and establish the basic facts.
5. The Advisory Committee will decide the outcome of the incident depending on its assessment:
6. Appropriate Behaviour- No case to pursue, informal discussion and further training
7. Serious poor practise/misconduct- Formal warning and further training
8. Possible Child abuse- Report to police and Government officials
9. BFO Director will inform the perpetrator of the outcome of the incident through an informal or formal discussion depending (written warning, termination of contract, termination of NGO partnership).

**Note**: All people involved in the incident, including the perpetrator will be offered supportive tools and resources that aim to guide away from corruptive actions and behaviours.

***If the violation is criminal…***

The advisory committee, along with BFO Director Belinda Marshall, will discuss the ramifications of pursuing legal action based on the incident and will also consider the appropriate action based on the history of human rights violations by authorities in certain areas. In ALL instances BFO will consider the terms of the Geneva convention, the United Nations policies on Human Rights and Amnesty international.

* Perpetrators will be contacted by Belinda Marshall and have the opportunity to discuss the incident at greater length.

* The individual or group of individuals will be put on immediate leave, or their involvement with the organisation will be terminated based on the nature of their violation.
* The correct Government/s will be contacted and informed of the incident.

5. **COMPLIANCE**

To safeguard the welfare of all children and protect young people from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm; All BFO employees, NGO partnerships within its school projects and community programs, volunteers, and donors must adhere to the following conducts:

**Staff/volunteer/project partnership conduct**:

* Should be committed to treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
* Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
* Respect a young person’s right to privacy
* Always dress professionally appropriately at all times
* Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person,

**Staff/volunteer/project partnership Contact with vulnerable beneficiaries:**

* Should actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable beneficiaries, away from others
* In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable beneficiary this meeting must be as open as possible, and other Brighter Future Organisation staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. The meeting should not take place in a room that is not private, unless absolutely necessary. If no adult is available as company to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

**Staff/volunteer/project partnership and Physical Contact**

* Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable beneficiary without first asking permission.
* Brighter Future Organisation will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries. The responsible adult will never be a member of Brighter Future Organisation staff.
* If a child or vulnerable beneficiary is reliant upon an adult for any aspects personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, ... will engage the responsible adult, which will never be a member of Brighter Future Organisation staff.
* Staff and volunteers should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.

6. **CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS POLICY**

If you fail to agree to and follow the Policy, you put yourself, your colleagues and BFO at risk, and your act or omission may result in disciplinary action, dismissal or termination of contract. In addition, you and BFO could be committing a serious criminal or civil offence, which may result in a large fine for BFO, confiscation of assets and imprisonment or a fine for you and anyone else involved.

Appendix 1

Incident Report Form

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| Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary:Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:  | Name of staff member completing form:  |
| Date the incident took place: Time:  |
| Where did the incident take place: |
| Who else was involved/witnessed the incident: |
| Details- Please provide a statement of fact: |
| Action taken: | Parents informed? Yes/No |

Signature of staff member reporting incident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of designated C.P. officer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_