

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Category: Governance & Risk Management

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Responsible Person: Board Chair

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Phil Pynor – Executive Officer

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Introduction

One Foundation International (OFI) is committed to ensuring that all children connected with our work are safe and protected from harm. While OFI does not directly deliver child-related programs, we fund and oversee local partner organisations overseas that may work with children.

We acknowledge that children have the right to be safe, respected, and heard. OFI recognises our role in setting clear expectations for our partners, sponsors, visitors, and supporters, and in ensuring that our operations and communications do not expose children to harm. This policy reflects our alignment with the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), External Conduct Standards, and international safeguarding standards.

Purpose

This policy establishes OFI's commitment to child safeguarding and child protection. It outlines how we will prevent harm (safeguarding), set standards for behaviour, and respond to concerns (child protection). It also defines the expectations we place on our partners to have strong safeguarding systems in place. The best interests of the child will always be our primary consideration.

Definitions

Child: Any person under the age of 18, as defined by Australian and international law.

Child Abuse: Any act or omission that harms or endangers a child. This includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as neglect and family violence.

Child Exploitation: Forcing a child to participate in any activity that is degrading, abusive, or harmful, including sexual, economic, or online exploitation.

Child Safeguarding: The proactive measures an organisation takes to ensure its activities and representatives do not harm children and that children are protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation. This includes policies, training, and risk management.

Child Protection: The reactive process of responding to specific concerns or disclosures of child abuse and taking appropriate action, which may include reporting to authorities.

OFI Representatives: All individuals and third-party organisations to whom this policy applies, including board members, staff, volunteers, contractors, donors, sponsors, and visitors.

Scope

This policy applies to all OFI representatives and to partner organisations that we fund, who are required to implement and maintain their own child safeguarding policies.

Guiding Principles

- OFI has zero tolerance for child abuse or exploitation.
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility for all OFI representatives and partners.
- The best interests of the child will always come first.
- OFI and its partners will take proactive steps to prevent harm.
- Children will be safeguarded regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, or background.

Partner Responsibilities

Because OFI does not run child-focused programs directly, we require all funded partners to:

- Maintain and implement their own child safeguarding policy and code of conduct.
- Screen and train their staff and volunteers appropriately. This includes conducting adequate background checks and ensuring staff are suitably qualified and supervised.
- Report any safeguarding incidents to OFI without delay.
- Allow OFI to monitor compliance through contracts, regular reporting, and formal review processes.

Standards of Behaviour (Code of Conduct)

All OFI representatives are expected to act respectfully and appropriately when engaging with children through sponsorship, visits, or other interactions. This Code of Conduct sets out the minimum standards required to protect children and uphold the reputation of the organisation.

- Engage in any form of abuse, exploitation, neglect, or discrimination of children.
- Use language or behaviour that is offensive, humiliating, or degrading.
- Be alone with a child or invite a child into private accommodation or vehicles.
- Form inappropriate relationships with children, including online or social media contact.
- Photograph or film children without the consent of OFI, the child, and their caregiver.
- Share children's personal or identifying information in any form, including online.
- Use computers, mobile phones, or digital media to exploit or harass children.

Sponsors and visitors may only meet children through approved visits organised and supervised by our partners. Direct contact with children outside these channels, such as unsupervised meetings, social media contact, or sharing personal information, is not permitted.

Images and Stories

OFI and our partners will use children's images and stories carefully and respectfully.

- **OFI and Partner Use**

Consent will be obtained before publishing images, and no information will be shared that could identify a child's exact location or put them at risk. Children will always be portrayed with dignity and as active members of their communities, never in ways that are degrading or misleading.

- **Sponsor Use**

OFI recognises that sponsors may wish to share their sponsorship experience with family, friends, and communities. To protect children's safety and dignity:

- Images and stories of children may only be used with OFI's approval and the consent of the child and their family.
- Sponsors may display a photo of their sponsored child privately but must not publish or reproduce it without OFI's permission.
- Social media sharing is only permitted if it does not include identifying information such as surnames, addresses, school names, or community locations.
- Children must always be portrayed respectfully and never in ways that could cause shame, harm, or risk to their safety.

Recruitment and Screening

OFI is a small charity with no direct child-related programs. We currently do not recruit staff or volunteers into roles that involve direct work with children. However, as part of strengthening our safeguarding framework, OFI will introduce minimum screening standards.

- All OFI staff, board members, and any visitors or sponsors engaging directly with children through our overseas partners will be required to provide a police clearance (or equivalent criminal history check).
- Should OFI's role change in the future, we will ensure all recruitment processes reflect child-safe standards, including robust background and reference checks, and mandatory safeguarding training.

Reporting and Responding to Concerns

Any OFI representative who suspects or becomes aware of child abuse or exploitation must report their concerns immediately.

- **Who to Report to:** Reports should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), whose role is to manage and refer the concern. If the concern is about the DSL, the report should be made to the Board Chair.
- **Responding to Concerns:** All reports will be taken seriously, treated confidentially, and managed with the best interests of the child as the priority. Anyone reporting in good faith will be protected from negative consequences.

