

**THE CAMBODIAN CENTER**

**FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

**CCPCR**



***CHILD PROTECTION POLICY***

## **Intended audience**

This Child Protection Policy document has been developed for associates of CCPCR, including; staff, volunteers, interns, contractors, consultants, partners, and visitors.

## **Aim/ purpose of this Child Protection Policy**

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to protect children and provide the safeguarding of children from abuse or exploitation. This policy ensures that CCPCR has procedures in place that prevent children from experiencing abuse by any person, including direct associates of CCPCR. This policy makes it clear what CCPCR should do in order to responsibly protect children. This helps to create a safe and positive environment where children can grow, develop and recover.

## **Responsibility for Implementation**

The Executive Director of CCPCR ensures that the full Child Protection Policy and all investigations of suspected abuse are in accordance with the Royal Government of Cambodia's national laws. If the Executive Director is involved in the abuse, the chairman of the Board can establish a committee to investigate the suspected abuse.

## **Definitions**

**Child:** *“Every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child”* (The United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child)

**Child Abuse:** Child Abuse is all forms of physical and sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and exploitation which harm children's health, growth and dignity. Child abuse can take many forms, for example physical, sexual, neglect and emotional and spiritual abuse.

**Child Protection:** Child Protection includes policies, systems and procedures to protect children from physical, sexual or psychological abuse.

**Vulnerable Cases:** Some children are more vulnerable to abuse than others, as they may be less able to protect themselves or are more susceptible to inappropriate attention. This may be as a result of their psychological conditions due to trauma experienced, or due to another physical or mental disability.

## **Statement of Commitment**

- CCPCR is committed to all children's rights and their welfare in Cambodia.
- CCPCR provides support to children and youth from varying circumstances to give them hope for the future. Our target population group includes children and youth from 5 to 25 years old. CCPCR shares selected information for cooperation and networking with agencies in the same field.
- CCPCR is committed to observe international laws on child rights and welfare; The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention of the Minimum Age of Working Children No 138, the Declaration on the World Summit on Children)

- CCPCR is committed to consider all children with respect and dignity. People who are in charge of taking care of children should also be a good role model for them. Childcare workers should spend time with each of the children, listen to them, keep their promises with the children and provide guidance and support.

### **Code of Conduct**

- Treat all children equally regardless of their race, sex, language, religion, nationality, ethnic group, color, ability or disability, property and status.
- Do not give special favors to particular children and exclude other children.
- Avoid punishing or disciplining children physically.
- Do not condone children's behavior which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Use appropriate language and behavior towards and in front of all children, do not use harassing, abusive, offensive and threatening language and/or behavior.
- Use computers, DVDs, VCDs, mobile phones and cameras in the proper way. Do not use them to exploit, harass or embarrass children, nor access pornographic or explicit content of any kind.
- Any physical or sexual relationships with children are strictly prohibited.
- When you work with children in close proximity, another adult should always be present.
- Do not invite children to your home or place of residence without an accompanying person and the permission of their parent or guardian. Children should only be invited to your home if they are at high risk of injury or danger.
- Refrain from hiring children as workers as it is unsuitable for their age, interferes with their educational and recreational activities and may endanger their well-being.
- Refrain from spending excessive time alone with children. Excessive time is considered to be anything beyond the expected time arising from the demands and responsibilities of the job position.
- Do not sleep with children in the same room or bed.
- Do not engage children in sexual activities or any activities that put children in a situation of risk.
- Do not touch, hold, hug or kiss children in an inappropriate way.
- Report allegations of child abuse immediately by following the procedures listed below.

### **Reports and investigation on abuse and suspected abuse**

- All CCPCR staff must know the procedure regarding what to do if an allegation is made by a child, parent, staff or visitor.
- CCPCR requires staff to observe Cambodian Law, including the labor code, at all times.
- Discussion about the risk or possibility of abuse within the organization should be open.
- The Shelter Manager is the designated person who has responsibility to deal with Child Protection issues in CCPCR.
- Both the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators will be treated with respect from the beginning to the end of the process.

- Records should be based on all facts from the investigation, and the records should be filed confidentially and carefully in the case management filing cabinet. The only person with access to this is the Shelter Manager.
- In the case that a foreigner is involved, their Embassy should immediately be informed of the case.
- In the case that the Shelter Manager is under suspicion, the Executive Director shall take on the case management responsibilities of the aforementioned.
- One of CCPCR's staff will be designated to deal with the media, police and other any stakeholders.
- CCPCR will help other organizations if they are inexperienced and require help.
- Anyone who knows of possible child abuse should contact the Executive Director immediately. The report should be made within 24 hours in order for a timely investigation to proceed. Any person who fails to report suspected child abuse may face disciplinary action.
- In the event that staff members have concerns regarding a child's welfare but no specific allegation to make or pass on, staff should relay these concerns to the Shelter Manager who will be responsible for ensuring the welfare of the child receives additional monitoring until satisfied that the concerns are innocent. In the event of suspicions remaining, the Shelter Manager shall investigate in line with normal procedures.
- After receiving a report of suspected abuse, the Executive Director will initiate an internal investigation. The investigation should be conducted by a committee and the Executive Director, with respect for the children's privacy and rights. The committee is selected for this purpose, and the Executive Director consults with the chairman and management team to deal with the case.
- The investigation should be conducted with the utmost care and concern for the children so as to allay risk of retribution and punishment towards accusers from individuals suspected of child abuse.
- An associate accused of child abuse will be temporarily suspended during the investigation. CCPCR gives the suspected person the opportunity to respond. As CCPCR are obligated to initiate an internal investigation, information and the names of witnesses for interview are provided.

### **Response to Internal Investigation Findings**

- CCPCR will inform associates, children and their family of the results following the investigation and any subsequent action.
- In the case that an allegation is deemed untrue or fabricated, a follow-up of the person who has been accused will be conducted.
- If child abuse is proven by the investigation, CCPCR will assist the children who might face physical or emotional trauma. This assistance includes medical treatment, counseling and any other assistance which the children may need.
- In the case that the investigation concludes that child abuse has occurred, but the person is not subject to criminal prosecution, CCPCR associate will be subject to disciplinary action, which includes immediate dismissal.

- In the case that the investigation concludes that child abuse has occurred, and the person is subject to criminal prosecution, all information will be reported to national police authorities. If the associate accused is an expatriate, the law enforcement authorities will conduct extraterritorial proceedings.
- If the associate is discharged from CCPCR due to child abuse, CCPCR will disclose the information about the case if requested by police. The disclosures will be made based on applicable law.
- The media might be involved when an allegation is raised within CCPCR. Only the Executive Director will have contact with the media.

**Recruitment and screening**

- Advertisements for job vacancies within CCPCR must state a commitment to child protection and the expectation that all staff and volunteers work to protect children from abuse and exploitation.
- The commitment of prospective employees must be a condition of employment. All prospective employees must be informed about the Child Protection Policy at the beginning of recruitment.
- Screening is important for all people who work at CCPCR. Anyone who applies for a position has to prepare their CV and submit it to CCPCR. Applicants must agree to, and sign the Child Protection Policy, and state that they have never been convicted on any charges of child abuse.
- Any person who has been dismissed for abuse cannot apply for a position within CCPCR. References and suitability will be checked during an interview with the prospective staff member.

**Agreement on the Child Protection Policy of CCPCR**

I have read and understood the terms of the Child Protection Policy, and I agree to the conditions stipulated. I declare that I do not have a criminal history with offenses related to children inside and outside of Cambodia. I consent to CCPCR verifying my background and references.

I understand that if a complaint about child abuse is raised during my work with the CCPCR, my employment would be suspended, pending investigation by the police. I understand that in the case I am found guilty of physical or sexual abuse, my employment will be terminated, unconditionally.

I understand if I do not report any suspicions of abuse involving staff, volunteers, interns and partners, my employment may be terminated, unconditionally.

**Staff/ Volunteer/ Intern signature**

**CCPCR’s Executive Director**

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Name: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

Date: .....