

Child Protection Policy

African AIDS Foundation



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1. Title of Policy

African Aids Foundation Child Protection Policy

2. Introduction & Preamble

This policy outlines African AIDS Foundation's (AAF) commitment to the protection of all children whom we seek to serve. It was developed to ensure that programs and projects in Africa supported by Australian citizens take all measures to see that African children are protected from exploitation and abuse and that their rights are protected.

This policy seeks to comply with AusAID's minimum Child Protection Policy compliance standards for contractors and NGOs (category 5) and ensure AAF meets ACFID requirements should AAF seek to become a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct in future.

The policy seeks to address and provide procedures for the following:

- Child-safe recruitment and screening processes, including criminal record checks prior to engagement, targeted interview questions and verbal referee checks, for all personnel (including volunteers) who will be working with children
- a documented child protection complaints management procedure
- regular provision of child protection training
- a child protection code of conduct that must be signed by all personnel implementing AAF funded activities in-country
- a commitment that AAF does not permit people to work with children if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing
- a provision in any employment contracts or volunteer agreements that AAF has the right to dismiss or transfer to other duties volunteers or personnel who breach the child protection code of conduct
- provision for policy review

Our Mission

Our mission is to serve marginalised people through Christian faith in action, particularly those afflicted by HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Our Vision

AAF envisions a world where children experience life in all its fullness and are protected, cared for and given the opportunities to become all that God meant them to be. It is with this vision that AAF will endeavour to create a world wherein children will flourish, a world where "children from families impacted by HIV/AIDS are able to remain with their families."

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to assist organisations, programs, and projects, through financial, in-kind, and volunteer support, as they seek to:

1. Reduce poverty and assist communities reintegrate people living with HIV/AIDS into normal community life.
2. Reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS through community education.

3. Assist children from families impacted by HIVAIDS to remain with their families.
4. Provide economic opportunities to rebuild communities affected by HIVAIDS.
5. Alleviate suffering for people infected and affected by HIVAIDS.

Our Values and Commitments

As an organisation we are committed to:

1. Christian ethics, principles and values in all our dealings.
2. People more than programs.
3. Free choice, not coercion, in decision making and participation.
4. The equality and dignity of all people irrespective of background, gender, education, or religious affiliation.
5. Consultative and respectful relationships with organisations, communities, families, and individuals, which encourages trust and participation in decision-making by all stakeholders.
6. Programs which provide sustainable and transferable skills.
7. Programs which assist communities, families, and individuals to shape their own future.
8. Cooperation with organisations that have similar values and objectives.
9. Continual review and refinement of our objectives, and management structure.
10. Experimentation and adaptation in problem solving and delivery of programs and services.

Nature of Programs

Development: AAF is dedicated to providing long-term sustainable solutions to poverty. This may include medical treatment, agricultural, animal husbandry, small business enterprises projects, and any other creative way which assists impoverished people care for their children and families. AAF provides and/or facilitates training in the areas of education, vocation, life skills, leadership and family development.

Advocacy: Through speaking, publishing, and other forms of advocacy, AAF is passionate about telling the world what is currently happening in Africa and mobilizing like-minded individuals and organisations to do likewise.

3. Statement of Commitment to Child Protection

AAF believes that all forms of abuse and exploitation suffered by children are contrary to concepts of justice. We support the rights of children and will act to ensure a child safe environment is maintained in the projects we support and by the volunteers, members and any staff representing AAF. AAF believes that all children have a right to survival, development, protection and participation as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 and will seek to uphold these rights.

AAF is committed to alleviating the suffering of children affected by the HIVAIDS pandemic in Africa. We do this because we have the means and the moral obligation to change the lives of children who are orphaned, homeless, living in emergency situations, trapped in exploitative labour or who become victims of sexual abuse. AAF recognises a child as someone under the age of 18. AAF also accepts that steps must be taken to protect families and children from those who might seek to gain trust and access to young children through a development agency's work. The possibility of staff, donors or volunteers abusing or harming children is one which we take seriously and are committed to working to prevent.

AAF believes that child protection is a corporate and an individual responsibility. All AAF staff and volunteers will be made aware of the need for a child protection concern in all that we do. Associations with anyone found to be engaging in abusive and exploitative relationships with children will be broken. AAF will take all possible steps to develop child protecting procedures and practices. AAF recognises that amongst different cultures, contexts and legal systems it is difficult to define a universal standard and understanding of both child abuse and protection. This policy attempts to set out a standard that can be translated into different cultures and circumstances. This policy should be applied in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts of maltreatment that are universally described as abusive.

AAF is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as the promotion of their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training of all those who will work with children in order to prevent abuse.
- Procedures to deal with allegations of abuse quickly and effectively.
- Supporting those who have been affected by abuse in their past.
- Evaluating the existence and effectiveness of local child welfare/judicial infrastructure and all child protection statutes that are prescribed by the local childcare authorities of the countries and cultures in which we work.

AAF believes that all children have equal rights to protection and that it is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. AAF takes its duty of care seriously and will aim at all times to provide the safest possible programs and environments for children. This will be achieved by identifying and managing risks that may lead to harm and a commitment to undertake regular reviews of this policy.

AAF seeks the commitment of all members, directors, volunteers and various partners in Australia and Africa in ensuring the protection of the rights of all the children who we support through our projects.

4. Purpose of the Policy

AAF is committed to developing, implementing and reviewing guidelines and practices which promote the safety and well-being of all children accessing its services and programs, in particular to minimise the risk of abuse to children (See Clause 2.6 of the ACFID Code of Conduct). This CPP has been developed to provide a practical guide to prevent child abuse in AAF's programs. It outlines a range of risk management strategies that will be implemented which will reduce the risk of children being harmed. The CPP is a tool which can be used to develop awareness and training to educate staff, volunteers and others about child abuse and promote a child safe and a child friendly culture where everyone is committed to keeping children safe. It provides guidance to staff, volunteers and others on how to work respectfully and effectively with children. This provides all stakeholders, including staff and others with a safe working environment.

Additionally, this policy will provide a framework for accountability and guidance on how to respond to or raise concerns and allegations of child abuse. It aims to create an open and aware environment

where concerns for the safety and well being of a child can be raised and managed in a fair and just manner, which protects the rights of all. AAF is committed to adhering to local and international child protection criminal laws, which prohibit the abuse and exploitation of children. These include local laws where AAF's programs exist, and international laws and conventions in relation to all forms of child abuse and child exploitation, including: child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, child labour and child pornography. AAF will advocate for the protection of children from all forms of exploitation, especially sexual exploitation and actively incorporate CPP practices in all of our programs and activities.

5. Guiding Principles

Child protection and children's rights are not only moral imperatives but have increasingly been enshrined in legislation as societies and governments have increasingly become aware of the vulnerability of children to exploitation. Children and young people have a fundamental right to be safe from harm and to grow up free of violence and exploitation. They have a right to develop physically, intellectually and socially in conditions of freedom and dignity. Child protection requires a commitment from all levels of communities in Australia and Africa to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm. This includes a commitment to practices that minimise risks and the ability to respond appropriately to incidents where children are at risk of harm.

African AIDS Foundation is committed to the safety, wellbeing and welfare of children and young people with a disability. This must be the primary consideration and focus when making child protection decisions. AAF supports a prevention and early intervention approach to preventing child abuse and exploitation and supporting children and young people and their families. This is consistent with the legislation, policies and international declarations as follows:

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157 - This NSW legislation outlines the reasons children may be identified as being at significant risk of harm. S23 (c) outlines behaviour by others which would be deemed to place a child at serious risk of harm.

Crimes Act 1914 Part IIIA - Child Sex Tourism- It is a crime for Australian citizens or permanent residents to engage in, facilitate or benefit from sexual activity with children (under 16 years of age) whilst overseas. These offences carry penalties of up to 17 years imprisonment for individuals and up to \$500,000 in fines for companies. Australian citizens are still subject to the laws of the country and can be prosecuted in the country where any offence occurs.

Crimes Act 1900 No 40 - The legislation in NSW defines acts against children which are crimes and the sanctions for these offences. These include but are not limited to sexual assault of children, physical assault, and child pornography.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child entered into force Nov. 29, 1999. Developed by the Organisation of African Unity this charter outlines the rights of children in Africa. A copy of the charter is available at:
<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/afchild.htm>

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

AusAID Child Protection Policy
http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pubout.cfm?ID=7954_7703_6074_4255_4227

The Interagency Standing Committee (IASC), developed principles of sexual behaviour, including international standards for protection of beneficiaries (adult and/or child). They were adopted by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and are supported by AAF. They are considered an integral part of this policy: <http://www.icva.ch/doc00001962.html>

ACFID Code of Conduct
<http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct>

AAF has based this policy on the above legislation and charters as the basis for child protection that takes as its fundamental principle that all children have their own inalienable rights.

Any form of child abuse and exploitation is unacceptable and AAF has a stance for a zero tolerance policy on all forms of child and sexual abuse. All children should be equally protected and assisted regardless of their gender, nationality, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, physical or mental health or criminal background. AAF recognises that all children have a right to be safe at all times, and understands an obligation to provide safe and protective services and environments.

AAF has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that children are safe from harm. Adherence to the policy is a mandatory requirement for all staff, volunteers and members. AAF will ensure that all staff and relevant stakeholders are made aware of the policy and their responsibilities towards it.

As a future signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), AAF is committed to the standards of ACFID's Code of Conduct and the principle that all decisions regarding the welfare and protection of children are made based on the Best Interests of the Child Principle. This principle requires that in making decisions, due consideration must be given so that the child receives maximum benefit possible from services provided, and that the positive impacts of any course of action outweigh any negative impacts.

6. Context

AAF is aware that the majority of child abuse takes place within the family and immediate community. It is for this reason that we value the partnership and active participation of our partners in Africa and Australia, boys, girls and families and African communities in combating all forms of abuse and exploitation against children.

While most child abuse occurs within families and communities, children also experience abuse and exploitation in organisations that provide them with support and services. Experience has shown that physical, emotional abuse and neglect in child focussed organisations and institutions are less systematic and usually unplanned. It is usually the result of poor conditions, bad work practices and negligent management.

Child sexual abuse in organisations is often planned and premeditated. Child sex offenders target organisations working with children in order to gain access to children. Paedophiles may seek work in organisations that provide opportunities to make contact with children and an environment where their abuse may go undetected. Child sex offenders will be attracted to organisations with inadequate recruitment practices and supervision. Over the last decade many western nations have enacted rigorous laws against child sex offending and many child-focussed organisations have implemented tighter screening practices for their staff and volunteers. These improved child protection measures have led to increasing numbers of child sex offenders moving overseas to seek work in developing countries and development programs. They will seek work in countries with inadequate child protection laws and law enforcement as well as countries where children and their families are vulnerable to exploitation. During recent responses to natural disasters and emergencies it was widely reported that people who pose a risk to children (e.g. convicted child sex offenders) applied for positions in programs that brought them into contact with vulnerable children. AAF is aware that the work that it is engaged in both in Australia and overseas may provide opportunities for child sex offenders and will seek to minimise these risks.

Child abuse is a global problem that affects both boys and girls. In some societies it may be deeply rooted in cultural, economic and social practices. Children are abused physically, sexually, emotionally and through neglect. Children may be forced to endure the most hazardous forms of child labour including sweat shops and prostitution. In some countries boys are kidnapped and forced into armed conflict as soldiers. In many countries children experience severe corporal punishment in schools. Children living in poverty are more at risk of child abuse and exploitation.

According to the World Health Organisation (2001):

- Forty million children below the age of 15 suffer from abuse and neglect and require social and health care.
- An estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked every year. (Every Child Counts, New Estimates on Child Labour, International Labour Organisation April, 2002; UNICEF 2007);
- 1 million children enter the commercial child sex trade every year (1995 estimate). The numbers are likely to be higher now. (Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, United Nations A/50/456, Sept 1995).

AAF is aware that In Africa the HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in children being left without families to care for them and open to abuse and exploitation. This may include practices where children may be sexually abused because of cultural misunderstandings that treatment for HIV/AIDS is achievable through the sexual abuse of children. Children may also be born with HIV as a result of mother to child transmission in pregnancy. Older Children may also be made responsible for siblings as seen in child-headed households, often at the expense of their own development and education.

7. Scope

This policy applies to all AAF Board, AAF members, volunteers, visitors to projects, supporters and in-country partners who do not have a child protection policy. This CPP also covers (at the time of development AAF had no paid staff), any future employees and contract employees, covering all employment categories including without limitation staff, consultants, independent contractors,

part-time and temporary employees, interns and volunteers.

8. Definitions

Duty of Care

Duty of Care is a common law concept that refers to the responsibility of the organisation to provide children with an adequate level of protection against harm. It is the duty of the organisation to protect children from all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury.

Child and young person

A child or young person is regarded to be any person under the age of 18 years, unless a nation's laws recognise adulthood earlier

Child Protection

Is the term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or stop children being abused or maltreated.

Child Abuse

Abuse happens to male and female children of all ages, ethnicity and social backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and political persuasion. Child abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying, child labour and domestic violence. Both boys and girls can be the victims of abuse, and abuse can be inflicted on a child by both men and women, as well as by young people themselves. In some cases, professionals and other adults working with children in a position of trust also abuse children.

Physical abuse

This 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.

Emotional abuse

This occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected or frightened by threats. This may involve name-calling, being put down or continual coldness from parent or caregiver; to the extent that it affects the child's physical and emotional growth.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure or the deliberate denial to provide the child with clean water, food, shelter, sanitation or supervision or care to the extent that the child's health and development are placed at risk.

Sexual abuse

This occurs 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 - regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. These can be contact or non-contact acts, including threats and exposure to pornography.

Child-Sex Tourism

ECPAT International defines child-sex tourism as:

'...the commercial sexual exploitation of children by men or women who travel from one place to another, usually from a richer country to one that is less developed, and there engage in sexual acts with children, defined as anyone aged under 18 years of age.' (ECPAT International, 2006)

Bullying

Bullying is the inappropriate use of power by an individual or group, with intent to injure either physically or emotionally. It is usually deliberate and repetitive. The bullying may be physical or psychological (verbal and non-verbal). Physically, bullying includes pushing, hitting, punching, kicking or any other action causing hurt or injury. Verbal bullying includes insults, taunts, threats and ridicules. Psychological bullying includes physical intimidation and ostracism.

Particularly vulnerable children

Child abuse takes place not only within the family environment, but also outside the family, including: institutions, at work, on the streets, in war zones and emergencies. AIDS orphanages have many children who fit this definition.

Children in emergencies

Children in emergencies are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. In an emergency or crisis situation, children are extremely vulnerable when they become part of a displaced or traumatised population. The communities in which AAF seeks to work have many children who meet this definition.

Child

Any person under the age of 18 (CRC and ACRWC)

Paedophilia

This is a preference for obtaining sexual gratification through children, including all related offences.

Staff

Includes, but is not limited to, permanent, temporary, casual employees and volunteers of AAF.

Community

Includes but not limited to development projects and other areas where AAF staff and partners may operate from.

Programme or project

A geographical location where AAF support projects and programmes. Example is conference venues, workshops, schools.

9. Child Protection Risk Management

A number of potential risks exist to children in the delivery of AAF programs to the vulnerable and disadvantaged. In recognizing these risks, AAF is committed to proactively assessing and managing these risks to children in our programs and in the communities in which our partners work to reduce the risk of harm.

This can be achieved by examining each program and its potential impact on children. Programs that involve direct work with children are considered a higher risk, and therefore require more stringent child protection procedures. As children are part of every community in which AAF operates, we are mindful of potential risks. Risk management is required to be an ongoing part of every activity. A child protection risk assessment of the circumstances of children is to be incorporated into all planning conducted prior to any new or emerging AAF project (see Appendix 4). Where relevant, such assessments will include plans to work with community leaders, caregivers and communities to reduce risks facing vulnerable children and to address the needs of children who are in situations of

abuse, neglect or exploitation. AAF personnel and others will be continually made aware of risks, and actively minimize opportunities and situations where children can be harmed. A child abuse incident reporting sheet has been developed and all AAF volunteers and staff are to be made aware of its existence. (Appendix 3)

10. Code of Conduct

Volunteers, members, staff and others are responsible for maintaining a professional role with children. Establishing and maintaining clear boundaries that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of the professional relationship is expected. All AAF personnel are required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of the organisation's child safe behaviour protocols and should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their role as a representative of AAF and a positive role model to children and adults. AAF has developed its child safe code of conduct primarily to protect children but also personnel and the organisation from false accusations of inappropriate behaviour or abuse by providing clear behavioural guidelines and expectations.

Disciplinary action will apply to those who breach the behaviour protocols. Such persons will be confronted and corrective action will be taken (IASC Six Core Principles for Humanitarian Workers) up to and including termination of volunteer assignment or employment. The following principles are a non exhaustive list of behaviour expected of any person representing AAF:

- All AAF employees, volunteers, interns, visitors, independent contractors, and Board Members (hereafter referred to as AAF personnel) will be expected to read, understand and abide the behaviour protocols.
- AAF personnel may not stay overnight alone with one or more non-related children or minors.
- AAF personnel should not hire minors as "house help" or provide shelter for project identified minors in the AAF personnel's home. For purposes of this policy, "house help" refers to hiring children to serve as maids, housekeepers, etc. on a daily basis and not to the casual hiring of minors to serve as baby-sitters.
- Two or more staff/adults must be present in any interaction with a child. This is to protect the child and to protect you from false accusations (otherwise known as "the two adult rule").
- Even though providing employment for a child under 15 may be culturally acceptable and provide benefits not otherwise available to the child, the hiring of minors may lead to misunderstandings and is inconsistent with international efforts to ban exploitative child labour.
- AAF personnel must not fondle, hold, kiss, cuddle, or touch minors in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- AAF personnel must avoid flirting, unwelcome flattering, or making suggestive comments to children.
- AAF personnel must be entirely professional in their relationship with minors and children, while at the same time demonstrating Christian love, compassion, and caring in both word and deed.

- AAF staff must be concerned about perception and appearance in their relationships with minors and children. AAF personnel should seek to live-up to the AAF Mission Statement and Core Values in all relationships with others.
- Adults are always responsible for their behaviour with any child with whom they interact.

The following inappropriate conduct towards children will not be tolerated:

- Verbal conduct such as derogatory comments or sexual advances, invitations, or using power and authority to persuade a child to act in ways that may sexually gratify the adult.
- Visual displays such as derogatory posters, pornography of any kind, cartoons, drawings or gestures, any form of written/verbal communication.
- Physical conduct such as uninvited or unwanted touching, hugging, blocking normal movement as well as taking a child off the program site or their home without authority.

11. Managing Visitors to AAF Programmes and Projects

In order to manage the child protection risks associated with visitors to its programs and projects AAF has specific guidelines for visitors to its overseas projects implemented by its in-country partners. The guidelines below are to be followed by all visitors including staff; volunteers, board and members in preparation for and during visits to AAF supported programmes. These guidelines include ensuring that:

- All applications to visit overseas programmes supported by AAF can only be arranged on application in writing to the AAF board stating the proposed dates and purpose of the visit. The Volunteer Coordinator and the Overseas Project Co-ordinator are responsible to arrange visits with in-country partners.
- All visits must be pre-approved by the in-country partner and confirmed by the AAF Board. Under no circumstances will the board agree to a visit without the approval of the in-country partner.
- The in-country partner is under no obligation to organise a visit upon sudden arrival of or contact by a member or supporter.
- AAF and/or the in-country partner are responsible for educating visitors on child protection matters. This includes facilitating and ensuring police background checks are completed.
- AAF reserves the right to deny permission to visit.
- Any person visiting an AAF project must be advised of the behaviour protocols and local sensitivities.
- Visitors must sign the CPDF and accompanying behaviour protocols as acknowledgment of receipt and understanding of these protocols. It is the responsibility of AAF to maintain a record of these forms on file.
- All visitors must be accompanied to homes of children, communities and any locations where AAF programmes operate by an in-country partner staff member at all times.

- Any actual or suspected abuse of children or inappropriate behaviour by a visitor will be reported immediately to the in-country program manager who will in turn refer the matter for investigation by police if a criminal matter or internal investigation. The in-country partner will advise the AAF Volunteer Co-ordinator of any allegations of abuse of children AAF undertakes to support in-country partners with any investigation of an AAF sponsored volunteer or visitor.
- Children should not be invited to leave or taken away from their communities, nor invitations to the visitor's country issued.

12. Communication about Children and Use of Children's Images

AAF will at all times portray children in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way. Our guide-lines on the use of children's images, in line with the ACFID Code of Conduct Clause 4.2, are:

- A child should always be portrayed in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- A child's family or guardians must always be asked for consent when using their images. When asking for consent to use the image, details should be given as to how and where this image will be used.
- A consent form which may be used by AAF personnel is attached (Appendix 5) to this policy and should be signed at the source by the parent/ guardian stipulating clearly the purpose for which the image will be used.
- There should be no identifying information of the child used in the publication of images with their location.
- Language which implies a relationship of power should be avoided.
- Children should be portrayed as part of their community. The children AAF supports through its activities are beneficiaries; however, the child's dignity should be preserved whilst presenting the reality.
- AAF's publications and website will not use scanned images of children without formal permission of the office responsible for the project and the parent (s) / guardian (s) of the child. This permission should be in writing (whenever possible).
- Personal and physical information that could be used to identify the location of a child within a country will not be used on the AAF website or in any other form of communication about a child.
- Local cultural traditions should be assessed regarding restrictions for reproducing personal images. Images should be an honest representation of the context and the facts. AAF's standard is that web sites and other promotional materials should not use scanned images of children that do not ethnically portray their true circumstances. In liaison with AAF and people supplying images to AAF, every effort should be made to ensure that all photographs used in publicity comply with the standard.
- When sending images electronically, file labels should not reveal identifying information.
- All photographers will be screened for their suitability, including police checks where appropriate.
- Individuals or organisations requesting the use of AAF resources such as DVDs or photographs are required to use materials in a manner that portrays AAF values and mission regarding the work undertaken by AAF and the children we work with. Failure to adhere to the agreed upon use of the material will result in the immediate termination of permission

to use the subject materials and/or require immediate return of all materials provided by AAF as well as any copies of such materials.

13. Employment of Staff and Volunteers

AAF is committed to child safe recruitment, selection and screening practices. These practices aim to recruit the safest and most suitable people to work in our programs. AAF endeavours to safeguard the protection of all children. Legally permissible measures will be taken to ensure that all potential volunteers and any future employees are sufficiently screened. This extends to all staff, volunteers, interns, contractors and consultants.

AAF child safe recruitment practices include:

- Promoting the commitment to child safety on AAF's website, in other promotional materials and in any job advertisements.
- All applicants for any position with AAF whether paid or voluntary will receive a copy of AAF's CPP and be informed of the screening requirements when they are sent the application form.
- All job advertisements including volunteer promotions on printed and electronic media shall carry a statement indicating AAF's commitment to protection of children and need for, where permissible by law, police checks. The statement shall read thus:

As a child-focused organisation, AAF is committed to the protection of children and does not engage volunteers or employ staff whose background is not suitable for working with children. All employment and volunteer placements is conditioned upon the successful completion of all applicable background checks, including criminal record checks for overseas assignments.

- Applicants are required to submit a detailed application form when applying for a paid position. This form will ask for information about the applicant's background such as dates and places of employment, education and other activities.
- Volunteers are required to complete the application forms in the volunteer package.
- All positions will be assessed for the level for risk in relation to contact with children. Positions working directly with children will require the highest level of screening and the applicant must possess relevant qualifications and experience in working with children. Police checks are mandatory for all positions whether voluntary or paid where direct contact with children is likely.
- Job descriptions are required for all paid positions which describe key selection criteria and outline tasks and accountabilities.
- Interviews will be conducted for all personnel, face-to-face.
- Behavioural-based questions will be used to ask for examples of the candidate's past behaviour and experiences. In positions working directly with children, the panel will explore the candidate's motivations for working with children, which will include value-based questions seeking information about the candidate's attitudes to children, professional boundaries, accountability, team work and how they have responded to ethical dilemmas.
- A minimum of two reference checks will be required for all personnel. This includes volunteers on placement and consultants. The candidate's most recent employer/supervisor must be one of these referees. AAF will verify the identity of the referee and the nature of their relationship between the candidate and the referee. All

referees will be contacted directly. Written references will not be accepted. AAF reserves the right to request additional references.

- Any future paid staff and will be required to have a police clearance or relevant criminal history checks depending.
- Volunteers in overseas projects will be subject to the authority of the local management of the in-country partner and are required to accept the directions of the local management in their dealings with children which are not inconsistent with this policy.

Recruitment Process

Prior to any employment all candidates being considered for a paid or unpaid positions will complete a CPDF, a background check release form (appendix 6) by which they will grant consent to facilitate the carrying out of relevant employment-related checks. The screening process shall include, where permissible by law, police clearance as well as reference checks.

Police checks will be conducted in accordance with the current procedures of NSW Police outlined on their website. AAF is responsible for the cost of employment screening for potential employees and volunteers are required to meet the costs of police checks.

All individuals seeking volunteering opportunities or employment who have any convictions for child abuse, paedophilia or related offences will not be considered suitable for a position with AAF in any capacity.

During interviews and reference checks sessions, questions on perceptions on children, child protection and general conduct around children will be asked. Letter of appointment shall be subject to a police report confirming there are no child related convictions.

14. Child Abuse Reporting Processes

How to respond to a child who has been abused

Abuse and exploitation of children is unacceptable. AAF will not tolerate any form the possibility of staff, volunteers or others abusing children. All reports of child abuse will be acted on immediately. AAF is committed to working to prevent such incidents and will take all measures possible to prevent abuse and hold accountable those who abuse children.

Any staff; volunteer or other personnel who is a witness of child abuse is required to report these concerns or allegations immediately to the appropriate in-country authorities and the manager of the partner. If the abuse occurs in Australia follow the guidelines below. Appendix 1- Recognising Possible Signs of Abuse is provided to assist individuals understanding of what constitutes signs of child abuse.

If a child reports an incident to you, the allegation must be taken seriously and listened to carefully. The in-country partner manager or delegated staff member should be consulted regarding any immediate actions required to be undertaken to protect the child. These concerns may relate to a child or a staff member involved in the organisation or a concern about a child or person/s outside of the organisation's programs. If you do have a concern you should immediately follow AAF's child abuse reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

Who should report

All AAF personnel are required to report any abuse of children of which they become aware. Staff of in-country partner organisations where the in-country partner has no Child Protection Policy is required to follow these procedures while developing their own policy.

What should be reported

- Any disclosure or allegation from a child regarding their safety, abuse, or exploitation.
- Any observation or concerning behaviour exhibited by an AAF staff, volunteer or in-country partner staff member or volunteer or stakeholder that breaches AAF's code of conduct for working with children.
- Inappropriate use of the AAF's photographic equipment or computers including evidence of child pornography.
- Staff or volunteers engaging in suspicious behaviour that could be associated with sexual exploitation or trafficking.

Who to report to

Overseas

Child abuse reports should be made to local child protection agencies in Africa. In-country partners will provide AAF with details of who the local authorities in their area of operation are. This information will be provided to overseas personnel prior to departure. Details of reports made should be advised to AAF Overseas Project Co-ordinator by email to eddieozols@gmail.com.

Australia

Reporting child abuse in Australia is a clearer process compared to responding to incidents that may occur overseas. In all Australian states and territories, sexual and physical abuses of children are crimes. The age of sexual consent in NSW is 16. It is a criminal offence for persons who are in positions of power and trust (e.g. teacher, parent, carer) to engage in sexual activity with children under the age of 18. Reporting child abuse can either be made to the NSW police or the state child protection authorities.

If there is an allegation or suspicion of child sexual abuse by a staff member or volunteer in the organisation, these matters will be reported to the state police. In NSW there is a special unit dealing with child sexual crimes. Concerns about the welfare of the child in relation to other types of abuse should be reported to the child protection authorities in NSW as follows:

New South Wales: Department of Human Services -Community Services, **Child Protection Helpline on 132 111** (TTY 1800 212 936) for the cost of a local call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Concerns about Australians engaging in child sex tourism, child sex trafficking and child pornography should be reported to the Australian Federal Police (Transnational Sexual Crimes Squad). Online reporting can be made at https://www.afp.gov.au/online_forms/human_trafficking_form.html.

Reporting of child abuse allegations overseas

Child abuse reports made overseas should be reported to the Overseas Project Co-ordinator of AAF in Australia and/or the Chairperson of AAF. If the report involves personnel representing AAF an

initial assessment will be made based on the quality and reliability of the information and a decision will be made (in consultation with the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Board) on what steps to take.

The local reporting procedures will guide the process based on whether the allegation constitutes a criminal offence in the country, or whether it is a breach of the AAF code of conduct and will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. The first step will be to gather all the relevant information and address any health and protection needs of the child. The matter may be directly referred to the local police and or authorities if the allegations are considered to be criminal offences. If the incident has occurred outside of the program the matter will be referred to an external body or agency dealing with child protection matters in the country.

When to report

Child abuse concerns should be raised immediately.

How should it be reported

Verbally and by completing the AAF child abuse incident reporting form (Appendix 3).

What will happen next

AAF in consultation with the in-country partner (if applicable) will discuss the allegations and then decide upon the next step. This may involve either:

- Interviewing the person/persons who made the allegations or other witnesses to gather more information with which to make a decision;
- Report to the local police and or child protection authority if this has not already occurred ;
- Report the allegations to the Australian Federal Police;
- Concern handled internally if it is not a criminal matter;
- No further action taken.

AAF will treat all concerns raised seriously and ensure that all parties will be treated fairly. The principles of natural justice will apply. All reports will be handled professionally, confidentially and expediently. All reports made in good faith will be viewed as being made in the best interests of the child regardless of the outcomes of any investigation. AAF will ensure that the interests of anyone reporting child abuse in good faith are protected. Any employee, who intentionally makes false and malicious allegations, will face disciplinary action. The rights and welfare of the child is of prime importance. Every effort must be made to protect the rights and safety of the child throughout the investigation. In-country partners with whom AAF works are required to provide information about how to report any child protection concerns about AAF personnel visiting or working in their organisation.

15. Involving Children and Young People

AAF is committed to child and youth participation in program design and development. AAF will do this by educating in-country partners to provide opportunities for children's views to be heard and incorporate their views into programs involving children. Program design and delivery will include promoting children's understanding and knowledge of their rights to a safe environment, free of abuse. In-country partners will be asked to ensure information about local child abuse reporting

processes and who to contact if they are at risk, have been abused or are concerned about another child, is made available. The AAF Overseas Program Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring aspects of participation are included in all development projects submitted to the AAF Board for support.

Monitoring reports by AAF will include children having an opportunity for feedback about staff and services.

Because of AAF's objectives, its status in a developed economy and its potential access to policy-makers in Australia, it is strategically positioned for advocacy on issues directly related to the relief of suffering and the transformation of the condition of life for poor people.

Where possible and appropriate AAF may in collaboration with other child-focused agencies be involved in community, regional and national activities which promote the protection of the rights of children in Africa. Advocacy efforts may include pressing for changes in public policies that have an adverse affect on children in Africa. Where appropriate AAF may raise awareness among sponsors and donors on issues related to the abuse and exploitation of children and measures being taken to protect them.

AAF will initiate and collaborate with childcare professionals and other agencies to keep current on child protection issues to ensure knowledge, policies and procedures are up to date.

AAF will disseminate best practices and lessons learnt concerning child rights and child protection throughout in-country partnerships to enhance knowledge and staff competence in child protection.

AAF will continually examine itself to reduce risk to children n AAF projects and to children in general.

16. Educating the Organisation and Overseas Partners on Child Abuse and the Child Protection Policy

AAF will maintain its commitment to educate personnel and others in the CPP, in how to reduce risks and create child safe environments. AAF will promote child safe practices to in-country partners which keep children safe in the organisation and in their own community, and provide information about child protection to the children and communities in which we work. This information will include reporting child abuse if they have concerns about AAF personnel. All staff, volunteers, members of the Board and others will be given a copy of the policy and will be required to sign a declaration (Appendix 2) stating that they have received and fully understand its content. Any future employees, volunteers and others will be informed of AAF's CPP during the application process. All new employees, volunteers and others will be taken through a compulsory overview of the CPP during the induction phase and made aware of their individual responsibility to uphold the AAF Child Protection Policy at all times.

Any organization, group, or individual requesting the use of AAF's resources such as videos or photographs must sign an agreement with AAF as to the proper use of such materials. Failure to adhere to the agreed upon use of the material will result in the immediate cancellation of AAF's permission to use the subject materials and/or require immediate return of all materials to AAF.

Partner Organisations and their commitment to Child Protection

When AAF enters into agreements with in-country partners or other child-serving organisations it will request from such partners written commitment to child protection policy and procedures. Absence of such policies can place children and AAF at risk. Where such policies and procedures do not exist, AAF's policies and standards will apply until in-country partners can develop their own policies.

17. Reviewing the Child Protection Policy

AAF's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed every two years. The secretary will manage the review of the CPP, and the members of the Board will be consulted in the process.



Recognising Possible Signs of Abuse

The following signs may be indicators of abuse that has taken place, but should be considered within the cultural and environmental context.

Physical Signs of Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Neglect –malnourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care (in context of the local of environment).
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse/ itchininess/ soreness /discharge or unexplained bleeding.
- Difficulty walking or sitting.

Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters e.g. public masturbation and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia.
- Torn, stained or bloodied underwear.
- Unexplained pain in the genital area.
- Pregnancy in adolescence where the identity of the father is vague or secret.
- Excessive bathing.

Emotional Signs of Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

How to respond to disclosure by a child

- Above everything else listen carefully and keep calm.
- Show acceptance of what the child says and show care and concern (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Look at the child directly and do not outwardly show outrage, disgust or anger.
- Be honest. Tell the child you will need to let someone else know - don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen. Your role is to listen to what the child/young person wants to tell you and not to conduct an investigation (beware of asking any leading questions as this may prejudice any subsequent investigation).
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling. Some helpful responses may include: That must have been really hard, I am glad you have told me, it's not your fault, I will help you.
- As soon as possible write down what has been shared and include as much detail as possible as to where the abuse took place, is it still currently occurring, where it occurred in the past, the name of the perpetrator if possible. Write down exactly what the child has said and what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times and when you made the record. Keep all handwritten notes for an indefinite period in a secure place.

Things Not to Say or Do

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it! Are you sure this is true?
- Bombard them with questions e.g. Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises such as not to tell anyone.
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".
- Indiscriminately discuss the circumstances of the child/young person with others not directly involved.

Other Actions to Take

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance. Let the child know that you are going to do something, what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Protect the Child - Once an allegation is made there should be an immediate response that protects the child from further potential abuse or victimization. The child may require medical assistance or counselling support. Where possible the child should remain in the place of residence or relevant program. Exceptions may be made where the child is deemed to be at risk of victimization by peers as a result of the allegation or because the alleged abuse has occurred in home-based care. If the child is in immediate danger you should discuss with the in-country partner arrangements for the child to go to a safe place.
- Distance the alleged perpetrator - The best interest of the child may warrant the standing down of a staff member or volunteer. In-country managers should recommend the

appropriate action in writing to the person against whom the allegation is made. AAF personnel against whom allegations are made are to be treated similar to local personnel. AAF should be advised as soon as possible to arrange any support required for its personnel and to assist the in-country partner in any way required to manage any investigation.

- Maintain Confidentiality - All reports, the names of people involved and the details are to remain confidential. Details will be released on a “need to know” basis or when required by relevant local or Australian law or a notification to police or child protection authorities is made.

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Position within African AIDS Foundation Australia: _____

DECLARATION (Please read this carefully before signing)

I have read and fully understand the requirements of African AIDS Foundation's Child Protection Policy and my responsibility towards it. I agree to be bound by these standards and code of conduct of the CPP of AAF and to uphold the behavioural guidelines and expectations of the organisation in the performance of my services on their behalf. I declare that I have no criminal record or associations which would prejudice my work with children and AAF.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date of Report: _____

Name/s of Reporting Party: _____

Position within AAF (e.g. volunteer): _____

Contact Details (address and telephone): _____

Incident Information

Name of alleged victim: _____

Gender (circle one): Male / Female

Address: _____

Date of Birth (if known) and Current Age: _____

Name(s) of Parent/Guardian: _____

Incident Description

Incident Date(s): _____

Location(s) where incident took place: _____

Name(s) of alleged perpetrator of abuse: _____

Name(s) of any Witnesses: _____

Risk Factors <i>What could go wrong? What are the risk factors?</i>	Probability <i>What is the likelihood of something going wrong?</i>	Impact <i>What would be the consequences</i>	Exposure <i>Where could children be exposed to risk? How</i>	Exposure <i>What actions can be taken to reduce or eliminate risk/</i>	Action Status <i>Has the action been taken or still pending?</i>

Consent

I, _____ the legal guardian hereby give my full informed consent to African AIDS Foundation to use the photograph(s) of (child's name) _____ my child, grandchild, relative, foster child (circle best description). This permission is for the purpose of helping in their raising of awareness of issues facing African children affected by or impacted by HIV/AIDS and for the purposes of assisting African AIDS Foundation to market it and the projects it supports in my community. This consent is on condition that the name of my child is not disclosed.

I give this consent voluntarily without expecting any personal gain and that I will not make any claim on AAF or the local in-country partners that provide support to my family.

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Prohibited Employment Declaration**Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998**

The *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998* makes it an offence for a prohibited person (a person convicted of a serious sex offence, the murder of a child or a child-related personal violence offence, as well as a Registrable Person under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*) to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in, child-related employment.

All AAF volunteer work in Africa is deemed to be child related employment.

Section 33B of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as:

- An offence, involving sexual activity or acts of indecency, committed in New South Wales and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more; or
- An offence, involving sexual activity or acts of indecency, committed elsewhere and that would have been an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more, if it had been committed in New South Wales; or
- An offence under section 80D or 80E (sexual servitude) of the *Crimes Act 1900*, committed against a child; or
- An offence under Sections 91D-91G (child prostitution, other than if committed by a child prostitute) of the *Crimes Act 1900* or a similar offence under a law other than a law of New South Wales; or
- An offence under Section 91H, 578B or 578C (2A) (child pornography) of the *Crimes Act 1900* or a similar offence under a law other than a law of New South Wales; or
- An offence of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit an offence referred to in the preceding paragraphs; or
- Any other offence, whether under the law of New South Wales or elsewhere, prescribed by the regulations.

NOTE: A conviction for carnal knowledge is classified as a serious sex offence under this legislation.

Section 33B of the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 defines a child-related personal violence offence as an offence committed by an adult:

- Involving intentionally wounding and causing grievous bodily harm to a child; or
- Of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit such an offence.

Under Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998:

- It is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment;
- Employers must ask existing employees, both paid and unpaid, and preferred applicants for child-related employment to declare if they are prohibited person or not;
- All people in child-related employment must inform their employers if they are a prohibited person or remove themselves from child related employment; and
- Penalties are imposed for non compliance

Declaration:

I am aware that I am ineligible to apply for or otherwise attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in, child-related employment if I have been convicted of a serious sex offence or child-related personal violence offence as defined in the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*, or if I am a Registrable Person under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*.

I have read and understood the above information in relation to the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*. I am aware that it is an offence to make a false statement on this form.

I consent to a check of my relevant criminal records, to verify the statements I have made here, at my expense as a volunteer in line with the requirements of NSW Police.

I declare that I am not a person prohibited by the Act from seeking, obtaining, undertaking or remaining in child-related employment.

I understand that this information may be referred to the Commission for Children and Young People and/or to NSW Police for law enforcement purposes.

Name (block letters): _____

Alias (previous names): _____

Signature: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Date of Signing: _____

AFP	Australian Federal Police
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
AAF	African AIDS Foundation Australia
CPDF	Child protection declaration form
CPP	Child protection policy
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations; 1989)
IASC	Interagency Standing Committee (United Nations 2006)
Personnel	Any person representing African AIDS Foundation. This includes Directors, members, volunteers, contractors whether in a paid or voluntary capacity
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

As a representative of African AIDS Foundation I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct as outlined below.

I will:

- Respect cultural differences and treat all children and young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions;
- Be concerned with the reputation and perception of AAF and seek to reflect the organisation's Mission Statement, values and Core Beliefs in all of my relationships and activities with children and young people.;
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers with whom I have contact;
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers and have children and young people participate in the decisions that affect them;
- Report any concerns of child abuse to the appropriate people and speak up when I observe concerning behaviours of any person, including colleagues;
- Recognise that inappropriate behaviour towards children, including failure to follow these behaviour protocols, is grounds for discipline. (Disciplinary action will vary depending on the offence, and serious offences including sexual abuse will be considered gross misconduct resulting in instant dismissal from employment, volunteer/internship or board membership);
- Agree that at all times staff should be transparent in their actions and whereabouts;
- Take responsibility for ensuring that I am accountable and do not place myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. (Where possible and practical, the 'two-adult' rule, wherein two or more adults supervise all activities where children are involved and are present at all times, should be followed. If this is not possible, AAF personnel are encouraged to look for alternatives such as being accompanied by community members on visits to children).

I will not:

- Engage in discrimination, prejudice, inappropriate or offensive language or oppressive behaviour of any kind that is intended to shame, humiliate or belittle children;
- Stay alone overnight with one or more children, understanding that it is unacceptable behaviour to take a child under my care to my home to stay overnight unsupervised or to sleep in the same bed as a child with whom I am working;
- Hire children as 'house help'. Even though providing employment for a child may be culturally acceptable and provide benefits not otherwise available to the child, it may

lead to misunderstandings and is inconsistent with AAF's belief to ban exploitative child labour;

- Hold, kiss, hug, fondle or touch children in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way. Whilst touch can be healthy and good, it is never appropriate if it is meeting the needs of the worker rather than the needs of the child;
- Smack, hit or physically assault children or young people;
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes;
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children. (AAF personnel need to be aware that they may work with children, who because of circumstances and abuses they have experienced may use a relationship to obtain special attention. The adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively. Adults should avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position);
- Develop sexual relationships with children or relationships with children that may be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child;
- Condone or participate in, behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Use photographs or videos of a child for publication in any form (including social networking sites such as My Space and Facebook) without the consent of the child's parents or guardians;
- Seek to make contact and spend time with any child or young person outside the program times.
- Use my own or AAF's computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras inappropriately, nor use them for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children.
- Use any disciplinary measures towards children that are violent or intended to humiliate the child.

I acknowledge receipt of the AAF Child Protection Policy and acknowledge that I am required to adhere to it as a representative of African AIDS Foundation.

Signature: _____

AAF Witness: _____

Date: _____

Board of Directors Endorsement

This policy was developed by AAF Australia from January to April 2010

It was approved by the Board on 21 April 2010

It will be reviewed by April 1 2012

Signature _____ Chairman John Schwarz

Signature _____ Secretary of the Board Bruce Willman

Signature _____ Geoff Hoskin Deputy Chairperson

Signature _____ Sharon Pascoe-Thomas Director

Signature _____ Rosalie Schwarz Director

Signature _____ Natalie Hutchings Director

Signature _____ David Cooper Director

Signature _____ Steve Hutchings Director

Signature _____ Eddie Ozols Director