

E3 INITIATIVE CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

This Child Protection Policy was developed using the Child Protection Policies of three of our partner projects:

- Isibani Sethemba (South Africa) – IS
- Lulisandla Kumntwana (South Africa) – LK
- Word Alive Ministries (Malawi) – WA

As such it works across the countries in which E3 operates and is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

IS and LK's policies are in line with the:

- South African Children's Act (No// 38 of 2005)
- Children's Amendment Bill (B19F-2006)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
- South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996.

WA's policy is in line with The Child Care, Protection and Justice Act of Malawi (2010).

Our policy is based on the Christian and Social Work values and principles which state that every young person should be valued as a gift from God and therefore needs to have dignity and value and be protected from any form of abuse so as to enhance the social functioning of that person.

2. Why is this policy necessary?

E3's vision is to bring transformation into the lives of children and vulnerable people in some of the poorest communities in Southern Africa. It is vital E3 has a Child Protection Policy in place to safeguard children from any kind of abuse as far as possible and to minimise the risk of abuse where it exists.

Every human being, including every child, is worthy of our respect, because we are all made in the image of God and because God loves human beings and wants to have a loving relationship with every one of them. *Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Gen 1:26).*

E3 believes that all forms of abuse and exploitation suffered by children are unacceptable. It accepts that steps must be taken to protect children from persons with evil intent who may seek to gain access to children and win their trust through E3 funded activities. This policy applies to children who are beneficiaries of E3 partner projects.

Child protection is a corporate and an individual responsibility. All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the need to be concerned about child protection in all that we do to promote a safe and secure environment to protect the wellbeing and development of children. Associations with anyone found to be engaging in abusive and exploitative relationships with children will be broken.

E3 recognises that the policy may not offer complete protection to children or the organisation, but it deals with essential priorities for action. It is deliberately directive and specific and sets out key actions that anyone involved with children on behalf of E3 is required to fulfil.

No one should assume responsibility beyond the level of their experience and training in the management of child protection concerns.

3. Aims of the Policy

- To provide a welcoming, stimulating and empowering environment that is free from harm, enables children to recognise their rights and allows children to develop to their full potential through all the activities run by E3 and its partners, where children are the beneficiaries.
- To ensure that E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives know how to behave with children and what to do if there are concerns about the safety of a child.
- To allow staff to support any children that have had harmful or hurtful experiences.

4. The rights of children

According to section 28 of the Bill of Rights in South Africa, every child has the right to:

- 4.1 a name and a nationality from birth;
- 4.2 family care or parental care, or appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
- 4.3 basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services;
- 4.4 be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation;
- 4.5 be protected from exploitative labour practices;
- 4.6 not be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that:
 - 4.6.1 are inappropriate for a person of that child's age; or
 - 4.6.2 place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development;
- 4.7 not be detained except as a measure of last resort, in which case, in addition to the rights a child enjoys under sections 12 and 35, the child may be detained only for the shortest appropriate period of time, and has the right to be:
 - 4.7.1 kept separately from detained persons over the age of 18 years; and
 - 4.7.2 treated in a manner, and kept in conditions, that take account of the child's age;
- 4.8 have a legal practitioner assigned to the child by the state, and at state expense, in civil proceedings affecting the child, if substantial injustice would otherwise result; and
- 4.9 not be used directly in armed conflict, and to be protected in times of armed conflict.

A child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

5. The Children’s Amendment Bill (B19F-2006)

The Children’s Act (No// 38 Of 2005) requires that any child abuse or reasonable suspicion of child abuse be reported. The E3 staff or volunteer may then involve other agencies, such as social services, the Police and other child protection organisations such as ChildLine.

E3 will conduct internal investigations, but will co-operate with the proper authorities. This will include the Child Protection Units of the country’s Police Service.

The Child Protection Policy applies throughout E3, including events such as Life Skills, camps, outreaches, visits to projects and training courses.

6. Definitions

6.1 A Child

A child in E3’s context is defined as any person or human being under the age of 18 years (or 21 if still in education). This might also include any person under the age of 21 depending on the level of maturity – individuals’ abilities and current circumstances are considered when we respond to their needs. This policy also applies to a “vulnerable person”, meaning an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

6.2 Abuse

Child abuse is a general term used about situations where the child may experience harm. It means any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child, and includes assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury on a child; sexually abusing a child or allowing a child to be sexually abused; bullying by another child; or exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may psychologically or emotionally harm the child. We differentiate between different types of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual harm, sexual abuse and physical neglect.

7. What constitutes child abuse?

7.1 Physical abuse

This includes hurting or injuring a child, and incorporates inflicting pain, drowning, intentional drugging (drugs or alcohol) or smothering (suffocating), where there is knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. It is serious and repeated injuries which do not result from accidents and which are inflicted by or result from the negligence of the person in whose care the child is. It is the use of violence or physical strength leading to developmental problems.

7.2 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation of a child for the sexual gratification of an adult. Any child may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect, exploits the child, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated, or consented to the

behaviour.

7.3 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when the behaviour of words of a person has a negative effect on the emotional development (intelligence, memory, perception, attention, language and moral development) of the child. It is the continuous, repeated and inappropriate reaction to the child's emotional needs. There are two kinds of emotional abuse: emotional mistreatment and emotional negligence. The first is verbal emotional attacks on the child, and the child is threatened and sometimes isolated. The second occurs when the child does not receive appropriate attention or when the caregiver allows inappropriate behaviour (e.g. the use of drugs) in the child.

This includes using bizarre forms of punishment such as confinement in a closet or dark room, being tied to a chair, threatening or terrorizing a child. It also includes belittling, using abusive terms to describe a child and habitual scapegoating or blaming.

7.4 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse includes communication by words (i.e. derogatory name calling by adults or other children, negative criticism, yelling as a form of discipline), vocal tones, racial taunts and accompanying body language and attitudes, which demean a person's worth.

7.5 Spiritual harm

Spiritual harm can result when a person misuses his/her spiritual authority to negatively control, manipulate or dominate a child seemingly for Godly purposes but in fact for their own benefit.

7.6 Environmental risks

An environmental risk can occur when:

- the physical environment in which the child finds itself can be hazardous to the physical safety of the child, whether through negligence or intent; or
- control measures for access to children's venues are compromised, allowing access by unauthorised individuals.

7.7 Physical neglect

This occurs when a child's essential physical needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, hygiene, shelter and warmth.

In most cases, child abuse will be the result of deliberate or avoidable behaviour. In some cases a parent or carer may not be in control of their behaviour through disabling causes (such as substance abuse or mental health problems), but child abuse may still occur. However, the cause of the abuse may be of little consequence to the abused child, so child protection procedures must still be followed to ensure there is an appropriate and considered response.

Adults working with children should note that children can abuse other children and they should watch out for and eradicate bullying, name calling, incest etc.

8. Appropriate discipline

E3 agrees that every child needs discipline and boundaries set in a secure (as far as possible) and loving environment. This is essential for his/her development into a person that feels secure and loved, is self-confident, self-disciplined and able to deal with the stress of life. It is not punishment. Although discipline does involve correction (which is a form of punishment), it also involves instruction and affirmation. The goal of discipline is to help the child learn right from wrong, to respect the rights of others and to know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Discipline should therefore involve not only the correction of wrong or negative behaviour, but also rewarding and praising acceptable or positive behaviour.

9. Responsibilities of staff regarding the Child Protection Policy

9.1 Adults in the physical presence of children

When adults are in the physical presence of a child or children within the context of E3, it is their responsibility to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of children;
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and
- the relationships they form with the children under their care are appropriate in every respect.

9.2 Adults in indirect contact with children

The policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers (people who help with E3 activities without remuneration), donors and anyone else who has access to information concerning children within the context of E3 projects such as children's names, contact details, photographs, personal information and HIV status.

9.3 E3 Partner projects

This policy also applies to E3 partner projects, who must have a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is written, committed to by all staff and volunteers and is actively adhered to.

In the event of suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse, all adults whether in direct or indirect contact with children or whether staff, partners or volunteers, must follow the prescribed procedures.

9.4 Guidelines for working with donors, volunteers or reporters who visit E3 partner projects.

1. Each adult visitor, partner or reporter arranging to meet any child beneficiary of E3's partner projects will only be able to do so if it has been arranged in advance with the E3 CEO. If the person is known by E3 staff or Trustees, a written reference will be required from the staff member or Trustee inviting him/her. If not previously known by E3 staff or Trustees, a background check will be carried out before the visit.
2. The E3 CEO or another staff member will always accompany the visitor for the duration of the visit to partner projects to interpret and aid understanding of E3's work and context.
3. It is prohibited to have any communication post-visit with a particular child or family. Any

updates after the visit will be written by and sent from E3 staff.

4. All visitors, partners and reporters will be fully briefed on E3's Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and must agree to follow the policy.
5. Information about the country and its cultural traditions will be provided for the sponsor, to ensure that cultural practices are sensitively observed.
6. Visitors must respect and adhere to the boundaries of the relationship with the beneficiary and not interfere with parenting matters that do not impact the health, safety or welfare of the beneficiary.
7. Visitors must show respect to E3 staff, children, students, families and communities that they meet and take into consideration the cultural sensitivities of a particular area visited.
8. Visitors must not give contact details to anyone they meet through the project visit. The relationship is always through E3.
9. Visitors should not use on social media, websites or in print, images and stories they have gathered during an E3 partner visit, without prior consent of the E3 CEO or E3 Marketing and Fundraising Manager.

10. Recruitment and training of volunteers and employees

- 10.1 All volunteers (local and international) and employees will be given a copy of this Policy and will be asked to sign a declaration that they have received and understood it and will abide by it.
- 10.2 They will be asked to sign a declaration of criminal convictions as part of the application process.
- 10.3 They will be requested to give permission to E3 to do a police check at any time during their service to the organisation. For applicants in the UK, a DBS Check will be carried out before they are appointed and will be updated every 3 years (as recommended by the Criminal Records Bureau).
- 10.4 For all applicants, a reliable character reference will be obtained, and particular attention will be given to any area of concern relating to child abuse. During the interview process applicants will be asked about previous work with children.
- 10.5 The Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy will be made available to the public via the E3 website and on the Charity Commission website.
- 10.6 All volunteers will be assigned to a paid staff member (of E3 or one of our partner projects), who will monitor the volunteer to ensure that these policy measures are implemented and adhered to. Where there are concerns, the staff member will be asked to report to the E3 CEO.
- 10.7 All employees, parents, children and volunteers will have access to child friendly reporting procedures, including contact details for reporting possible child abuse.

11. Communication and photos about child beneficiaries

- 11.1 Communication about children should use pictures that are decent and respectful, not presenting them as victims. Children should be adequately clothed and poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive should be avoided. Language that implies a relationship of power should also be avoided. However, we also recognise there are times when children are in reality victims, for example, of famine. In such cases, the child's dignity should still be preserved whilst presenting the reality.
- 11.2 As has always been the case, E3's tone of voice for photos and stories, is to avoid stereotypes (e.g. Western aid worker tends helpless victim, etc.) and shows people helping and working for themselves, not as victims.
- 11.3 E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives will never take pictures of children and their parents/caregivers/guardians who say they don't want to be photographed.
- 11.4 Websites and other promotional materials should not use electronic images of children without permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child. When photos and stories are gathered by E3 staff, volunteers or other representatives, we will ask for verbal consent to use them for social media, the website and donor updates. All visitors will be accompanied by an E3 staff member.
- 11.5 On social media, the website and e-newsletter, E3 will not use children's real names or details of their specific location when using a photo and story. On Back to School donor updates, we will use children's real names and photos, but not specific information about where they live.
- 11.6 Photos and video will be stored securely using third party cloud storage. We do not store any photos, videos or stories for which we don't have consent.
- 11.7 Personal Information about child beneficiaries will be stored on E3's secure database, Salesforce and only accessed by E3 staff. Lists of children will not be stored on personal computers. The Back to School forms for children on E3's programme contain a Privacy statement which explains how we keep data and photos, and how we use them.

12. Code of Conduct

The following guidelines are intended to assist E3 staff in monitoring and supervising behaviour and interactions with children and to prevent those that may harm children from doing so, or to identify unreported cases of abuse. It seeks to protect E3 representatives from the likelihood of allegations being made against them either through simple misinterpretation of actions or malicious untruth. E3 believes it is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help to create a positive culture and environment by promoting good practice.

E3 Staff, volunteers and others who are in contact with children:

1. are not allowed to use any form of physical punishment to discipline a child. Physical force can only be used to stop behaviour that can be very harmful to others.

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1. Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
2. Be inclusive and involve all children without discrimination or exclusion on the basis of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or any other status.
3. Treat all young people with respect and dignity and encourage children's voices and views.
4. Be aware of peer abuse as well as high-risk peer situations and develop measures to protect younger children from peer and adult abuse.
5. Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.
6. Create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues and concerns.
7. Always put the welfare and best interest of each child first before achieving any goals.
8. Foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged.
9. Ensure anyone who has contact with children or with information relating to children, is sensitised about child abuse.
10. Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision making process.
11. Involve parents and caregivers as much as possible.
12. Be an excellent role model for children by being respectful, mature and patient.
13. Report suspected or alleged abuse to the designated child protection contact.
14. Avoid placing oneself in a compromising or vulnerable position when meeting with children (e.g. taking a child on a car journey or home on your own. Where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the E3 CEO and/or the child's parent or caregiver.

E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives must never:

1. Hit or otherwise physically assault a child.
2. Share a bedroom with a child or young person.
3. Use or allow harsh or degrading language that will mentally or emotionally abuse any child.
4. Date, be in a love relationship or become romantically involved with a child.
5. Develop a sexual relationship with a child.
6. Kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate, culturally insensitive or sexually provocative manner.
7. Do things of a personal nature that the children could do for themselves, including dressing, bathing and grooming.
8. Initiate physical contact (e.g. holding hands unless initiated by the child).
9. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
10. Allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.
11. Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
12. Act in a way that intends to embarrass shame, humiliate or degrade a child.
13. Use, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while participating in or assisting with programmes or activities for children.

14. Discuss sexual activities, dreams and fantasies, pornographic material, videos and magazines except in an E3-approved educational programme with children.
15. Possess any sexually oriented material such as magazines, cards, videos etc at work except when it is permitted as part of an E3-authorized educational programme.

13. Procedures for reporting suspected or actual abuse of children

13.1 Take immediate action

Should a person in E3 observe or receive any information about actual or suspected abuse within the context of E3 activities, he or she must immediately inform the appropriate E3 staff member. Where appropriate the matter will be referred for further investigation.

Any person who has knowledge or suspicion that a child is at risk must report this to the appropriate E3 staff member. Together they will determine what action to take.

In order that a high standard of reporting and responding is met, staff undertake to:

- take seriously any concerns raised;
- take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns;
- support children, parents, staff or other volunteers who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;
- be guided through the child protection process by the principle of “the best interests of the child”;
- listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children;
- work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals (social workers, the Police etc) to ensure the protection of children.

13.2 Reporting child abuse by someone outside E3 or its partners

If an E3 worker suspects that a child is being abused by family members (e.g. grandpa/aunt/uncle) or other people, he/she must follow the procedure described below:

- Note the date and time you identified the abuse.
- Write a report, using the child’s own words as far as possible. Do not ask leading questions. Listen carefully and make notes of what the child says.
- Note the reason for suspecting abuse.
- Report his/her concerns to the appropriate E3 staff member.

13.3 Reporting child abuse by someone inside E3 or one of its partners

If a worker/volunteer suspects that a child is being abused by a staff member, Trustee or volunteer from E3 or one of its partners, the following procedure is applicable:

- Note the date and time the suspected abuse was identified.
- Write a report, using the child’s own words as far as possible. Do not ask leading questions. Listen

carefully and make notes of what the child says.

- Note the reason for suspecting abuse.
- Report the matter to the appropriate E3 staff member.

13.4 Helpful statements to make to the child

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says).
- Thank you for telling me.
- It is not your fault.
- I will help you.

Do not say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure that this is true?
- Why? Who? When? Where?
- Never make false promises

13.5 Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality is of the utmost importance when dealing with issues and concerns regarding possible abuse. E3 staff members/volunteers must exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information via the reporting process as described above. Any matters regarding the abuse or the matter in general must only be discussed within the above mentioned reporting structure. The status of the child suspected of being abused should not be disclosed to any persons outside of the reporting structure without the informed written consent of the child.

If a child confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff or volunteer tells the child sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer for the child's own sake.

13.6 Confidential record keeping

Any concerns, allegations or disclosure must be written down at the time or as soon as possible after the concern has been raised. Records must be signed and dated.

Records must be locked away in a safe place which is not accessible to those outside the reporting process. Information may only be shared with relevant parties and it must always be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

Disciplinary steps will be taken to deal with the situation according to E3 Disciplinary Procedures. Any E3 staff member or volunteer found to have abused a child while they were a staff member or volunteer at E3 will be subjected to immediate dismissal following this investigation and E3 may decide to begin legal action against the former staff member or volunteer.

14. Implementation of the policy

All E3 staff members/volunteers are obliged to sign this E3 Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and are obliged to adhere to all of its contents.

15. Declaration of acceptance

This policy should be signed and dated before commencement of this relationship. E3 will keep the Declaration of Acceptance on file. Any and all persons mentioned in Paragraph 10 must keep the remainder of the policy for their own safe keeping.

Published April 2019

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I hereby declare that I have read and understand the E3 Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and I agree to abide by its contents.

Print name.....

Signature.....

Position in relation to E3.....

Date:.....