

# **FUTURE WARRIORS PROJECT**

## **CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

Future Warriors Project Inc. (FWP) is committed to upholding the security, rights and freedoms of children and vulnerable adults at all times. While assisting developing communities through delivering project and providing international volunteers to local communities, the first priority of FWP is the safety and protection of the children and vulnerable people they are working alongside. FWP is committed to ensuring that the children and vulnerable adults are not exposed to abuse, exploitation, violence or neglect.

As a responsible organisation, we understand the importance of having effective policies and processes in place to protect the welfare and interests of the communities and individuals that our operations interact with. We know that particular risks exist in relation how we interact with children and vulnerable adults and we're focussed on ensuring that those risks are mitigated through the effective implementation of this policy.

### **SCOPE**

The Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy is an organization-wide policy and statement of intent. It applies to all FWP Board members, staff members and our operations, the operations of our partner organizations and also the actions of our volunteers. The policy is written with the acknowledgement that everyone affiliated with our organization has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults.

It also considers that FWP does not hold sole responsibility for protecting these members of society and identifies that their protection is also incumbent upon other stakeholders such as government agencies, families, communities and non-government organisations.

### **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this policy, a child is considered to be any person who is under 16 years of age. A vulnerable adult is considered to be someone who may be in need of additional community support for reasons of disability, illness or socio-economic conditions. This includes older adults suffering from dementia, or adults who through poverty are unable to care for themselves and avoid exploitation.

When this policy refers to project participants the conditions are related to any individual or group of individuals who are the recipient or in the vicinity of FWP project services. This can include children, vulnerable adults or any other individual who participate in our projects or who may be a bystander or in the vicinity of our project operations. Our project operations include any time spent

sleeping or being accommodated in the community or vicinity of our projects, or in transit towards our projects. When this policy refers to abuse the primary interpretation is sexual abuse or other physical or mental harm deliberately caused to a person. Similarly, exploitation refers to an act of treating a person unfairly in order to gain some kind of benefit.

## **BEST INTERESTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

All decisions and actions concerning a child or vulnerable adult will take the best interest of the individual as the most important consideration. It will be the policy of FWP that decisions or actions regarding any child, vulnerable adult, or groups of either, should ensure that the positive impact of the decision or action will outweigh any negative impact.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

FWP is committed to enforcing a policy of non-discrimination at all times. All children and vulnerable adults who have an interaction with FWP and its staff, board members or volunteers will be treated with respect and equal consideration. The guidelines set out in the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy aim to protect both children and vulnerable adults from abuse, and also volunteers from false accusation of abuse.

It is the policy of FWP to:

- Respect the rights and dignity of the children, vulnerable adults, families and communities with whom FWP works, and always act according to the best interest of the community.
- Demonstrate a commitment to actively preventing the abuse of children and vulnerable adults.
- Take positive action to prevent abusers becoming involved with FWP, and enforce stringent measures against any associate of FWP who commits abuse.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. PROJECT MANAGER**

The FWP Project Manager is to be responsible for ensuring that the Child and Vulnerable Protection Policy is distributed and understood by all staff and associates of FWP. The Project Manager is responsible for advising and informing all local staff of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

FWP actively encourages that this policy is also used by placements in which FWP volunteers work.

### **2. CEO**

The CEO of FWP is responsible for the development and implementation of this policy.

They ensure that its content and the procedures that support its implementation are fit for purpose. They ensure partners understand and support the policy, and adhere to them it at all times. They also ensure it is communicated appropriately with volunteers and other relevant stakeholders.

### **3. OTHER STAFF**

All staff are expected to comply with the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection policy. Any behaviour which breaches of this policy will be treated as serious misconduct.

### **3. VOLUNTEERS**

All FWP volunteers will receive a copy of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy during their program orientation and must acknowledge, in writing, their receipt and understanding of their responsibilities under the policy. They are made aware of the policy and any failure to meet the requirements of the policy is considered a breach of FWP's Volunter Terms and Conditions.

### **FWP VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND ORIENTATION**

- All FWP staff and volunteers will be informed of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.
- FWP reserves the right to terminate a staff member or volunteer's application or appointment if a reference check reveals that the volunteer is not suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, for any reason.
- The Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy will be reviewed by staff and volunteers during their orientation to the organisation.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FWP STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

This Code of Conduct provides guidelines deemed to be appropriate and proper behavior for FWP Board Members, staff and volunteers when interacting with children and vulnerable adults. These guidelines are primarily designed to protect the individuals that participate in FWP projects, but are also intended to protect Board Members, staff and volunteers from false accusations of inappropriate behavior or abuse.

- No child or vulnerable adult is to be taken outside of the project site, without making prior arrangements with the placement staff and/or the child's family members.
- No child or vulnerable adult is to be taken to any staff member or volunteer's homestay, guesthouse, hotel or accommodation unless they are accompanied by an adult relative or FWP staff member with permission of an adult relative.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers are not permitted to take any child or vulnerable adult to a cafe, restaurant or buy them food, unless permission has been given by an adult relative.
- FWP Board Members, staff and volunteers are not permitted to share a bed or room with any children or vulnerable adult while working on an FWP project.
- No presents are to be bought for placement participants without prior approval from the FWP Project Manager.

- Photography and videography of children or vulnerable adults is only permitted with permission from the project staff and photos/videos should not be taken in a way intended to belittle or degrade any placement participant.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers should not act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or vulnerable adults or perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers must display appropriate language, actions and relationships with children at all times.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers must take extreme care when interacting physically with project participants. Under no circumstance should any physical contact be, or have the appearance of being sexual in any way.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers must not exert inappropriate physical force when dealing with children or vulnerable adults. This includes pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping or any other action that could cause fear, intimidation or distress.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers must not discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular individual to the exclusion of others.
- FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers are responsible for their actions and reactions to children and vulnerable adults at all times. FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers are always considered to be responsible for their actions regardless of how a child or vulnerable adult behaves towards them.
- Where possible and practical, FWP Board Members, staff or volunteers should implement the 'two person' rule, whereby two or more responsible adults supervise all activities with children and vulnerable adults.
- Inappropriate conduct toward children and vulnerable adults, including failure to follow the behavior standards stated above, is grounds for discipline, up to and including dismissal from the FWP and/or police notification and legal action.

Please note, this is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle underlying this policy is that Board Members, staff and volunteers should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potential abuse and exploitation.

## **FWP BOARD MEMBERS / STAFF / VOLUNTEER COMPLIANCE**

I have read the complete Child Protection Policy. I fully understand and agree to follow all procedures contained within. If at any time I fail to follow the guidelines set forth by the Child Protection Policy, I understand that my volunteer program may be terminated by FWP and appropriate action will be taken.

Name:

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Signature:

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Date:

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