

INF Australia CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy number:		Version:	6
Owner:	CEO	Approved on:	December 2017
Users:	All	Scheduled review date	December 2020

THIS POLICY COMPLIES WITH: DFAT CHILD PROTECTION POLICY, ACFID CODE OF CONDUCT

RELATED INF AUSTRALIA POLICIES: Grievance and Discipline Policy

RELATED INF AUSTRALIA PRACTICE DOCUMENTS: Child Protection Practice, Child Protection Code of Conduct, Child Protection Risk Assessment

This policy and any verbal, written, or electronic communications relating to the subject matter contained in this policy are not intended and shall not be read to create any express or implied promise or contract for employment, or any benefit, or basis for specific treatment in specific situations. Further, this policy and the terms set out in it, do not form part of the contracts of employment of employees of INF Australia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The abuse and exploitation of children is not tolerated by INF Australia. We take seriously our responsibility to promote child safe practices and protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation in any form. We will take positive action to prevent child abusers becoming involved with INF in any way and take stringent measures against any INF Staff and/or Associate who abuses or exploits a child.

For the purposes of this policy, children are defined as those under 18 year of age.

INF Australia does not normally work specifically with children, but recognises that

- children in Nepal are especially vulnerable to exploitation. INF Australia has a duty to ensure that workers sent to Nepal by INF Australia do not pose a risk to children in that country, and that our projects are carried out in the best interests of children;
- staff and volunteers may come into contact with children while working in INF Australia's office in Australia, while attending speaking engagements and events, or at INF conferences, and that we share the responsibility for preventing them from being exploited.

This policy describes how INF Australia seeks to minimise the risk of child exploitation by effective recruitment screening, risk assessment and monitoring; how concerns about possible abuse or exploitation will be dealt with; and includes a Code of Conduct for all Directors, Staff and Volunteers connected with INF Australia.

This also applies to Partners of INF Australia, both in Australia and abroad. It recognises that partner organisations will have their own policies for identifying and dealing with child protection. INF Australia will work with them to ensure that there are no gaps in care.

This policy will be distributed to all staff and volunteers of INF Australia. It will be reviewed within three years of it being adopted by INF Australia's National Council.

1.1 DEFINITIONS

Child exploitation and abuse may include any activity which impacts a child in a way that is not in their best interest. This can include physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, bullying, harassment, spiritual abuse, sexual abuse, economic exploitation or sexual exploitation, including making, accessing or possessing child pornography.

2. POLICY

2.1 WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS SUSPICION OF ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION

Any disclosure, concern or allegation from a child, community member, staff or associate regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child (this includes actual, suspected, or risk of abuse or harm to a child), any observation or concerning behaviour exhibited by an INF staff, volunteer or other associate that breaches the INF Code of Conduct for Working with Children, any suspicion of abuse or exploitation must be reported immediately to the relevant authorities and to the INF Australia CEO (ceo@au.inf.org). In the event of a suspicion being reported, the INF Australia CEO will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate authorities are involved. If the suspicions involve the INF Australia CEO, it should be reported directly to INF Australia's Chairperson (chair@au.inf.org).

INF Australia CEO has responsibility for:

- Ensuring that all people associated with INF Australia, including volunteers and administrative staff, are aware of the INF Australia Child Protection Policy and sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all INF Australia's activities are carried out in a way that minimises potential harm to children;
- Co-ordinating action in cases of suspected child abuse or exploitation;
- Immediately notifying the INF Australia Chairperson, the Australian Police and Social Services and the donor partner (DFAT) of any incident or allegation and, if appropriate, the Nepal Police.

2.2 ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION

Allegations of Child abuse and exploitation will be investigated under INF Australia's Grievance and Discipline Policy.

2.3 RECRUITMENT

INF Australia will screen all staff and volunteers to minimise the risk to children and will not work with anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children. All staff and volunteers will be required to understand this policy and sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

A full list of the checks that will be carried out during recruitment can be found in INF Australia's Child Protection Practice document, but will include verbal referee checks, the use of behavioural questions during interview, a requirement for disclosure of any offenses relating to abuse or exploitation, and criminal records checks which include country of residence and citizenship.

Where INF Australia staff or volunteers have contact with children, INF Australia will arrange for training in child protection policy and protocols.

2.4 PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

INF Australia recognises that children in Nepal are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

- When travelling overseas, INF Australia personnel are expected to abide by standards of behaviour that are acceptable in Australia.
- Staff and volunteers should not take pictures or moving images of children that are exploitative or in any way inappropriate. INF Australia will not use such images.
- INF Australia requires that all partner organisations have a child protection policy that is actively implemented. Where new partners do not initially have a child protection policy, INF Australia will work with them to develop one.
- When considering a new funding proposal or partnership, or reviewing an existing agreement, INF Australia will consider the potential risk to children directly and indirectly associated with the project or partner.

2.5 RISK ASSESSMENT

INF Australia will undertake child protection risk assessments in all its project activities that will identify risks, classify any high risk activities and document steps being taken to reduce these risks.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This policy is a commitment by INF Australia to deal with child abuse and the perpetrators of it seriously, fairly and in the best interests of the child. It relies on INF Australia Directors, Staff, Volunteers and everyone associated with the organisation being observant of the children in their care and raising ANY concern, no matter how minor with the appropriate authority.

INF AUSTRALIA CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

I, [_____], acknowledge that I have read and understood INF Australia's Child Protection policy and agree that while representing INF Australia, I must:

- treat children with respect regardless of race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- not use language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- not engage children under the age of 18 in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts;
- wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children;
- not invite unaccompanied children into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger;
- not sleep close to unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present if possible;
- use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography through any medium;
- not use physical punishment on children, avoiding all forms of physical contact as far as possible;
- not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation, including labour laws in relation to child labour;
- immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation or abuse, the giving of gifts to children, and non-compliance with this policy in accordance with appropriate procedures;
- immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence, which occurred before or occurs during my association with INF Australia that relate to child exploitation and abuse.

When photographing or filming a child or using children's images for work-related purposes, I must:

- assess and endeavour to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;
- obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children 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;
- ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
- ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form;
- I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with INF Australia, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse.

Signed: _____ Print name: _____

Date: _____

REVISION HISTORY

Date	No	Summary of Changes	Section/s that changed	Authorised by:
2 nd Feb	4	Inclusion of DFAT guidance	2.1: include notification of DFAT in event of CP event CoC: strengthen clause on informed consent	INFA Board
30 th March	5	Inclusion of ACFID and DFAT guidance		INFA Board
7 th Nov, 2017	6	Changes, additions	Dot points in CoC	INFA Board