

Appendix 6A

The purpose of this document is to present the Child Protection Policy in a child friendly manner that can be understood by children (i.e., a human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier), either by themselves or with the assistance of an adult.

The sections of this appendix are as follows:

- Section 1: Our 'Child Friendly' version of the Child Protection Policy
- Section 2: Notes relating to the child friendly version
- Section 3: Definitions - to enable guidance and support to better understand this child friendly policy.

Section 1: Our Child Friendly version of the Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy

Assisi Aid Projects

- Assisi has worked with children over a long time and always makes sure they are protecting children from harm.
- Assisi is dedicated to protecting human rights, by treating all people with respect and fairness.
- Assisi believes that all children have the right to be safe and protected.



Who is this for?

- This document is for all children involved in Assisi's projects.
- The full Child Protection Policy is for all Assisi Staff, members, Governing body members, volunteers, representatives, contractors and visitors.
- These people must protect children and report suspected (someone believes something may have happened) or confirmed behaviour, that harms children.



Rules

- If a person does not follow the Child Protection Policy and/ or the Assisi Code of Conduct, they can face serious consequences, such as legal action or criminal investigation.
- Assisi understands it is very important to always check and manage risks to children to reduce the risk of harm.
- Assisi has a risk register for the organisation and also checks child protection risks in all of its project assessments.



Images

- Assisi makes sure to protect the privacy of children.
- Before using a person's image, Assisi makes sure that the person consents (freely says yes) to it being used and understands why it is being used.
- Assisi will get written permission from the person/s in the photo, or their legal guardians if they are a child.



Making a report – telling a trusted adult

Who should make a report?

- Any person (a child or adult) can make a report. This can be in Australia or overseas.
- Assisi personnel must make a report if they see, learn about, and/or believe that alleged (not yet confirmed) or confirmed acts of harm against children have happened.



What should be reported?

- Any information about the safety of the person involved.
- The date, time, location, and if any other people were there.
- The report can be about a child and/ or person in Australia or in another country. It can also be about someone not in Assisi's projects, such as a community member.



When to report?

Tell someone straight away if you see, learn about, or believe that something has happened.

Why to report?

It is very important that children are protected from harm, and that Assisi is able to stop any harm from happening.

Where to report?

- The complaints document on Assisi's website: www.assisi.org.au
- Email Assisi's Chief Executive Officer: assisi@assisi.org.au
- Call Assisi's Chief Executive Officer: +61 3 9070 9040
- Tell the Chief Executive Officer in person
- Email Assisi's President: president@assisi.org.au
- Tell a trusted adult, such as a parent, guardian, relative, or teacher.



Partners

- Assisi works with partners (other organisations) in the countries it works in.
- They work together to make sure all projects keep children safe.
- Assisi helps its partners make policies and set rules that will keep children safe, do background checks when hiring staff or volunteers, and training people to understand how to reduce risks to children in projects.
- Assisi works with partners to make sure that all projects and activities are child friendly, for example:
 - respecting and including the voices and needs of children,
 - making safe learning environments (not closing doors; having female and male teachers present; ensuring safety, lighting, privacy, sanitary products in sanitation facilities; protecting the rights of intersex and non-binary children)



Training and awareness

- Assisi makes sure that all its personnel know about and understand the requirements of this Child Protection Policy and Assisi's Code of Conduct.
- Anyone who may have contact with or who is working with children must take part in regular child protection awareness training.
- All Assisi staff and volunteers must complete the right training for child protection. This training includes abuse awareness, protection of participants and training on the current laws in the countries they work in.



Child Safe Employment

- Assisi does not allow people to work with children if this will put children at risk or in harm's way.
- The checks on a person may change depending on what role a person has and how closely the person will be working with children.
- This includes: Child safe interview questions; Working with Children Checks; and national Police Checks. Assisi makes sure Working with Children Checks and Police Checks are updated before they expire.

Section 2: Notes relating to the child friendly amendment

Introduction

The Child Protection Policy is a document available for all children involved in Assisi's projects to learn about their safety.

- Assisi has a long history of working with children and always makes sure they are protecting children from harm.
- Assisi is dedicated to protecting human rights, this is done by treating all people with respect and fairness.
- Assisi believes that all children have the right to be safe and protected.

The Child Protection policy lists the methods Assisi uses to stop harm and to act quickly when help is needed. These methods include:

- Recruitment and screening process (checking people are telling the truth when applying for a job)
- Code of Conduct
- Reporting procedures (Rules to follow when reporting harm)
- Breaches of Policy (What happens when someone does not follow the rules)
- Training
- Risk Management.

Who is this for?

- The full Child Protection Policy (Appendix 6) is intended for all Assisi Staff, members, Governing body members (including the Committee of Management and subcommittee members), volunteers, representatives, contactors and visitors – these groups of people can all be called “**personnel**”.
- All personnel must protect children and report suspected (which means that the child or someone else believes something may have happened) or confirmed behaviour, that harms children.
- This document is also made available to all children involved in Assisi's projects.

Making a report - Telling a trusted adult

- Who should make a report?
 - Any person (a child or adult) can make a report. This can be in Australia or overseas.
 - Assisi personnel must make a report if they see, learn about, and/or believe that alleged (not yet confirmed) or confirmed acts of harm against children have happened.
- What should be reported?
 - Any information about the safety of the person involved.
 - Tell the person the date, time, if any other people were there, and the location if possible.

- The report can be about a child and/ or personnel in Australia or in another country. It can also be about someone not in Assisi's projects, such as a community member.
- When to report?
 - Tell someone straight away if you see, learn about, or believe that something has happened.
- Where to report?
 - The complaints mechanism on Assisi's website: www.assisi.org.au
 - Send an email to Assisi's Chief Executive Officer: assisi@assisi.org.au
 - Make a phone call to Assisi's Chief Executive Officer: +61 3 9070 9040
 - Tell the Chief Executive Officer in person
 - If the Chief Executive cannot be contacted, make a report to Assisi's President via email: president@assisi.org.au
 - Tell a trusted adult, such as a parent, guardian, relative, or teacher.
- Why to report?
 - It is very important that children are protected from harm, and that Assisi is able to stop any harm from happening.

Images

- Assisi will make sure that any images and personal information used publicly for things such as newsletters or raising money will protect the privacy of children.
- When using an image of a child, Assisi will get written permission from the person/s in the photo, or their legal guardians, which confirms they understand how the image will be used.

Partners

- Assisi works closely with its partners in the countries it works in to make sure that all projects keep children safe.
- Assisi makes sure to help its partners strengthen their own policies and plans to keep children safe and protected. This includes helping them make policies and set rules that will keep children safe, taking steps when hiring employees and volunteers such as background checks, and training personnel to understand how to reduce risks to children in projects.
- Assisi will also help partners change reporting plans to meet the local laws of their country.

Training and Awareness

- Assisi makes sure that all personnel know about and understand the requirements of this Child Protection Policy and Assisi's Code of Conduct.

- Anyone who may have contact with or who is working with children must take part in regular child protection awareness training.
- All Assisi staff and volunteers must complete the right training for child protection. This training includes abuse awareness, protection of participants and training on the current laws in the countries they work in.

Child Safe recruitment and screening

- Assisi does not allow people to work with children if this will put children at risk or in harm's way.
- The checks on a person may change depending on what role a person has and how closely the person will be working with children. The checks include Child safe interview questions; Working with Children Checks; and national Police Checks. Assisi makes sure Working with Children Checks and Police Checks are renewed before they expire.

Risk Management

Assisi understands it is very important to always check and manage risks to children to reduce the risk of harm. This happens by:

- Risk assessment at the organisational level: Assisi has a risk register for the whole organisation that is looked at again four times a year or in the case of an incident. This register looks at child protections risks such as: risk of disobeying the policy, risk of systems failure, support from in country partners and emergencies and disasters.
- Risk assessment in projects: All projects and activities include child protections risks as part of their project risk assessment. Risk reduction actions are put in place for any existing or future risks and are regularly checked.

Breaches of Policy

- If a person does not follow the Child Protection Policy and/ or the Assisi Code of Conduct, it may lead to disciplinary action, legal action, a criminal investigation and prosecution.

If there are any words a child does not understand in this policy, they should be encouraged to ask a trusted adult to explain them by using the definitions found in Section 3.

Section 3: Definitions

Assisi adopts DFAT definitions, as found in DFAT’s Child Protection Policy, 2018.

The purpose of this appendix (6A.1) is to succinctly capture these definitions, in order to enable guidance and support to better understand Appendix 6A. Following the advice of DFAT, some of the language has been adapted, to enable children to better understand. Some child friendly definitions from the European Commission are also included to additional explanation.

Definitions marked * also have child-friendly versions that can be used for explaining to children. These definitions are sourced from the European Commission’s ‘Creating child-friendly versions of documents: *A guide*’, 2021.

*Abuse:

Abuse includes:

*Physical abuse—is when an adult uses physical strength to hurt a child’s body. This includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning.

*Neglect—is when a parent or caregiver does not provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the things that are important for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing.

*Emotional abuse—refers to a parent or caregiver’s inappropriate words and/or actions toward a child, or a pattern of failure over time to nurture their child and meet their emotional needs. These actions have a high chance of hurting a child’s self-esteem or social skills.

*Sexual abuse—the use of a child for sexual actions by an adult or significantly older child or adolescent. This can include touching private body parts (vagina or penis); masturbation; oral sex; vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object; touching breasts; voyeurism; exhibitionism; and exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography.

*Ill-treatment—disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate manner; making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child; aggressive use of force towards a child; and/or a pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate degrading comments or behaviour towards a child.

Note: the above includes a child or children being present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to any of the above

Child or Children:

*In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ‘child’ means every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child exploitation: One or more of the following:

- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child.
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material.
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming.
- Using a minor for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage.

Grooming:

Generally, refers to behaviour that makes it easier for an offender to access a child for sexual activity. For example, an offender might build a relationship of trust with the child, and then try to sexualise that relationship (for example by encouraging romantic feelings or exposing the child to sexual concepts through pornography).

Online grooming is the act of sending an electronic message to a recipient who the sender believes to be under 16 years of age, with the intention of getting the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person. This can include the person who was the original sender but can also be another person. Online grooming is also the act of sending an electronic message with indecent content to a recipient who the sender believes to be under 16 years of age.

Harm:

Refers to any harmful effect on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. Harm may be caused by financial, physical, or emotional abuse, neglect, and/or sexual abuse or exploitation whether intended or unintended.

Informed Consent:

Ensures the child and the parent or guardian understand the implications, purpose and potential uses of photographs or videos.

Working with Children:

Working with children means being involved in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. Working includes volunteering or other unpaid works.

Unacceptable risk:

The amount of identified risk that cannot be allowed, and that must be either eliminated or controlled. For people deemed an unacceptable risk, control mechanisms are not considered appropriate.

European Commission child-friendly definitions

Abuse:

Abuse includes:

Physical abuse— This is when an adult deliberately hurts a child’s body. This may leave marks on their body such as cuts or bruises. This includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning.

Neglect— Neglect is when a child’s basic needs are not met and a parent or carer does not look after them properly. This includes, access to food, water, getting to school, and having somewhere to sleep.

Emotional abuse—Emotional abuse is when someone hurts a child’s feelings. This hurts the child on the inside.

Sexual abuse— Sexual abuse is when a child is made to do something (by an adult or significantly older child/adolescent) with the private parts of the body that hurts, frightens or worries them. An adult using a child in this way to make money is called sexual exploitation.

Ill-treatment—disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner; making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child; hostile use of force towards a child; and/or a pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate degrading comments or behaviour towards a child.

Bullying—Bullying is when people are mean and unkind to each other, not just once but again and again.

Child or Children:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that ‘child’ means every human being under the age of 18.

Children’s rights:

Children’s rights are promises that the government made so all children can have a good life.