



## CHILD SAFE HORIZONS CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### I. INTRODUCTION

This child safeguarding policy has been developed in order to assist staff, contractors, consultants, and others associated with or contracted by Child Safe Horizons Limited (hereafter referred to as “staff and others”) to understand their roles and responsibilities when interacting with children. This policy covers staff and others both inside and outside of working hours. This policy and its accompanying Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct are mandatory for all staff and others to follow at all times when representing Child Safe Horizons (CSH) in any capacity.

Child Safe Horizons (CSH) takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously. We believe that any form of violence against children is an affront to children’s human rights and in many cases constitutes a crime under a nation’s laws. All children have the right to protection regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, country of origin, ability, family status, legal status, sexual orientation, or any other factor. By the very nature of our work, staff and others may, at times, come in close contact with vulnerable populations, including children. As a consultancy firm specialising in providing child protection services, we must hold ourselves to the highest standard possible at all times. Child Safe Horizons (CSH) requires all consultants who are included in its roster to provide a police background check from their local jurisdiction, and to sign a statutory declaration form stating that they have not committed any crimes against children.

CSH takes a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to harm and exploitation of children. This includes physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse, as well as exploitation of any kind, including but not limited to exploitative child labour, child pornography, and child sexual exploitation. Definitions of these terms can be found in section II of this policy document.

As part of agreeing to abide by this policy, it is also mandatory that staff and others associated with CSH immediately report any and all concerns involving the welfare of a child. Failure to report any observed or reported allegations will constitute a breach of this policy, and CSH will immediately terminate its relationship with that individual or entity. If necessary it will involve local authorities in investigating the matter.

## II. CHILD SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

Child Safe Horizons will ensure that anyone working with, representing, or associated with CSH is properly screened to ensure that they pose no potential risk to children. Steps that will be taken include:

- Requiring all consultants, contractors and others to provide a criminal record check or similar document no older than 12 months before engagement by CSH
- Requiring all consultants, contractors and others to provide CSH with a copy of their passport or other valid formal ID
- Child Safe Horizons will conduct verbal referee checks for all consultants before they are included as a permanent member of the consultant roster
- Potential consultants will be interviewed using behavioural-based interview questions.

**Anyone who is deemed by Child Safe Horizons to pose a risk to children will under no circumstances be engaged for work. If any allegations of misconduct or breach of the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct come to the attention of Child Safe Horizons, the consultant will be terminated immediately.**

## III. COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

A critical means of ensuring proper implementation of this policy includes having a clear and robust mechanism for reporting and following through on any concerns related to the safeguarding of children.

If a consultant or other person associated with Child Safe Horizons: directly observes a concern; is told about a concern by another adult; or is told about a concern by a child; then:

- A. The incident must **immediately** (within 24 hours) be reported to the Child Safeguarding focal point and Director, Karen Rasmussen, by emailing [karen@childsafehorizons.com](mailto:karen@childsafehorizons.com) and Natalie McCauley, the Consultancy Manager, [natalie@childsafehorizons.com](mailto:natalie@childsafehorizons.com). The reporting form in Appendix 2 of this policy should be used, if possible, so that all relevant information is captured. Remember that if a child is in immediate danger, you should first, protect the child, then report it to Child Safe Horizons as soon as possible. We will then discuss the best course of action and follow up with the organisation you are working with. You will also be kept informed of steps that are being taken.
- B. There may be incidents where the concern is related to the practices or lack of procedures that are employed by an agency for which the consultant is working at the time. This type of case is more sensitive,



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and needs to be handled with care. Again, a report must be made within 24 hours to Karen Rasmussen and Natalie McCauley, who will then discuss the best course of action. Please do not discuss the issue with the organisation, unless the organisation itself is the one reporting the issue to you. In this case, you should politely request that you be given a chance to file a report with Child Safe Horizons, as per your obligations under this policy. The aim of Child Safe Horizons is to protect not only children from harm, but also protect its consultants and others associated with CSH, as well as maintain positive relationships with the organisations we work with and for. **Under no circumstances should you conduct your own investigation, or second-guess a concern: Report ANY and ALL concerns to Child Safe Horizons within 24 hours of learning about them.**

- C. If Child Safe Horizons receives any allegation from any organisation that one of its consultants or contractors has been in breach of this Code of Conduct, any association with the consultant will be terminated immediately, and if necessary, Child Safe Horizons will provide an alternative consultant. CSH will fully cooperate with the agency and, if relevant, local authorities, in an investigation of the alleged abuse.

#### IV. TRAINING

All consultants, contractors, and others associated with Child Safe Horizons will receive an orientation in the CSH Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures when they first join the roster. Annual refresher training will be held for continuing consultants. In addition, other resource materials are available on the Child Safe Horizons website, and any individual in need of additional support should contact the Child Safe Horizons Child Safeguarding Focal Point and Director, Karen Rasmussen.

#### V. CODE OF CONDUCT

Appendix 1 of this policy is Child Safe Horizons' Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, which outlines the specific behaviours (do's and don'ts) expected of all consultants and others associated with Child Safe Horizons. All new consultants will be provided with a copy of this policy; once they have read through it, and gone through an induction with the Child Protection Focal Point, they must sign, scan and return by email the signed Code of Conduct, which will be kept on file. Consultants must keep a copy of this policy and the Code of Conduct with them at all times when working for Child Safe Horizons. A copy of the policy will also be posted on the CSH website.



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## **VI. EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS**

All contracts with consultants and others associated with Child Safe Horizons include a clause stating that non-compliance with the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct are grounds for immediate dismissal.

## **VII. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if warranted by a change of context, company structure, or donor requirements.