

Working with Children and Young People Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Working with Children and Young People Policy demonstrates the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers to child safety and to establishing and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment at The George Institute for Global Health (TGI) and its related research programs.

2. SCOPE

All individuals undertaking work in any capacity for or on behalf TGI must comply with this Policy. This includes all employees (whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis) consultants, students, seconded personnel, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and any other associates undertaking work for or on behalf of TGI.

Child safety and the safeguarding of young people is a shared responsibility at all levels of TGI.

This policy relates to our activities in India and conforms to National Policy for Children, 2013, draft National Child Protection Policy, 2018, Indian legal requirements and applicable child-related statutes, by-laws, rules, regulations, and orders by Indian government at present and that may be in effect in due course.

3. POLICY PRINCIPLES, DEFINITIONS

TGI is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Young People (CaYP) accessing our programs and activities. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We want children and young people who participate in our programs and activities to feel safe and be safe.

TGI is committed to implementing and strengthening our organisational culture and procedures to safeguard and empower those who are at higher risk of harm or exploitation, including young adults.

Children and Young People (CaYP) refers to all persons under the age of 18 years.

Complaint means any suggestion of abuse or harm that is disclosed, witnessed or demonstrated by a child. Typically, three categories of behaviour are the subject of a complaint:

– concerning conduct – behaviours or patterns of behaviour that are a risk to the safety of children. This also refers to ambiguous behaviours that are potentially inappropriate for children to be exposed to but may not necessarily be indicators of abuse occurring. The sharing of

inappropriate jokes may be an example of this

– misconduct – behaviours and/or act that can harm to a child emotionally, physically, sexually or negligent treatment, commercial or sexual exploitation resulting in harm to child's health, survival or dignity constitute a breach of TGI's Working with Children and Code of Conduct

– criminal conduct – conduct that, if proven, would constitute a criminal offence

4. RIGHT TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

TGI staff and volunteers support the active participation of children in our programs and activities, particularly those that relate to them. We will listen to children's views, respect what they say and involve them when we make decisions that affect their lives.

We value diversity and promote equality by understanding that providing a culturally safe environment for children needs to consider children's diverse circumstances. Each TGI program or activity involving children must adapt and respond to children's learning and communication styles, their needs and abilities and their life experiences. We are an inclusive organisation and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices based on age, gender, race, culture, belief, vulnerability, sexuality or physical disability.

5. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS, CAREGIVERS AND CHILDREN

We actively engage with families and caregivers in decisions that affect the children that are involved in our programs or activities. Families and caregivers are informed and involved with all aspects relating to the children and have a say in our child safety approach and relevant practices.

Parents, caregivers and children participating in our program/s will receive a copy of this Policy and Working with Children and Young People Code of Conduct.

6. RECRUITMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

TGI applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. All staff, consultants and volunteers at TGI working with children and young people will be required to review this policy and sign a compliance commitment before commencing work at TGI.

7. SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We provide support and supervision of staff and volunteers of all ages and backgrounds, so our people feel valued, respected and fairly treated.

8. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Anyone who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused, should report it to the Ministry of Women and Child Development's 'e-box' and report to CHILDLINE 1098, the police or the Child Welfare Committee.

Additionally, a child, parent/caregiver or any staff member or volunteer may make a complaint, or raise a concern, directly to the Manager, Human Resources or Executive Director.

Complaints reporting inappropriate behaviour around children in connection with a TGI activity or program will be dealt with quickly, honestly and fairly. The safety of children is our priority when responding to a complaint.

Upon receiving a complaint, the Manager Human Resources or Executive Director will take the following action:

- Listen to the person making the complaint and make a detailed record of the complaint
- If the complaint involves inappropriate behaviour and a breach of the Working with Children and Young People Code of Conduct, the relevant manager/leader will need to take action in accordance with TGI's internal discipline procedure:
 - Staff members will be immediately removed, transferred or suspended from their role and activities involving children pending the investigation's outcome
 - Where the investigation finds the complaint against them to be justified, staff members' employment will be summarily dismissed for gross misconduct under TGI's Disciplinary Policy & Procedures
 - Volunteers will be immediately removed and suspended from their activities involving children. Where the investigation finds the complaint against them to be justified, they will not be reinstated as a volunteer with TGI
- Where appropriate, managers, staff, children and parents/care givers will be informed of the outcome of the complaint and investigation.

9. REFERENCES

TGI's Code of Conduct
Working with Children Code of Conduct & Declaration (attached)
https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/npcenglish08072013_0.pdf
https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Download%20File_1.pdf
Complaints Record Form (attached)

10. REVISION HISTORY

Version number	Replaces	Reason / description of change
3.0 (25072020)	2.0	Updated Policy format and refresh
2.0 (01072020)	1.0	Revised to new Policy format
1.0 (01012013)	N/A	Effective January 2013

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Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

In addition to the rules and guidance provided within the Working with Children and Young People Policy, this Code of Conduct provides specific guidance to our staff and volunteers responsible for activities involving children and young people.

The Code serves to protect children and young people and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. Employees (whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis) consultants, students, seconded personnel, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and any other associates undertaking work, which involves working with children or young people, for or on behalf of TGI all agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

TGI will:

- Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers
- Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers
- Nominate the Manager, Human Resources as the contact person to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters

Management will:

- Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities of TGI
- Maintain a duty of care towards others and be accountable for matters relating to the aims and functions of TGI
- Establish and maintain a child safe environment in the course of their work

Staff and volunteers will:

- Be fair, considerate and honest with others
- Treat young people and children with respect, listen to and value their ideas and opinions, and protect their wellbeing
- Remember to act as positive role models in their conduct with young people and children
- Operate within the policies and guidelines of TGI, its programs and activities
- Be professional in their actions through their use of language, presentation, manner and punctuality
- Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly, and report on any breaches of these standards of behaviour to the Manager, Human Resources
- Maintain strict impartiality
- Comply with any specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children
- Respect the privacy of young people and children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know
- Maintain a child safe environment

Management, staff and volunteers will not:

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade young people or children
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, belief, vulnerability, sexuality or physical disability

- Engage in any activity with a young people or child that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves
- Be alone with a child for more than a very short time
- Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs
- Show favoritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
- Arrange contact with children outside of the organisation's programs and activities
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as changing clothes or going to the toilet
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

I, (print name), have read *The George Institute Working with Children and Young People Policy and the Code of Conduct*. I understand my responsibilities and will work within the Policy and Code of Conduct.

If I breach the Policy or Code of Conduct in any way, for any reason, I will inform the Manager Human Resources of my actions and the reasons for them.

Signature of staff member/volunteer: Date:

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Complaint Record Form

This form should be used to record a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of abuse or a complaint of inappropriate behavior.

1. Staff member receiving complaint

2. Name of child/young person involved

3. Name of person making the complaint

4. Name of person who the complaint is against

5. Nature of the complaint – include times, date, location and happened (this can include observations of the child's or young person's behaviour)

6. Details of any injuries and if the child or young person received medical attention

7. Accurately record what the child or young person said describing what happened

8. Details of anyone who saw what happened

