



WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS' POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The George Institute for Global Health (**TGI**) is committed to the safeguarding, and wellbeing of all children and adolescent participating in research activities within TGI and its related entities. TGI is committed to establishing and maintaining relevant gender responsiveness safeguarding of all children and adolescent from all forms of violence through a safe and friendly environment.

As part of this commitment, TGI adopts the key child safe principles outlined in this Policy and takes responsibility to ensure anyone who represents TGI does not in any way harm, abuse or commit any other act or threaten or attempt to cause violence, harm or injury against children and adolescent people or place them at risk of the same.

2. SCOPE

All individuals undertaking work in any capacity for or on behalf of TGI in all its offices and related entities must comply with this Policy, the associated Code of Conduct and any relevant and applicable SOPs. This includes all executives, employees, consultants, students, secondees, subcontractors, volunteers, and any other associates undertaking work for or on behalf of TGI (collectively **TGI staff**).

Child safety and the safeguarding of children and adolescents is a shared responsibility at all levels of TGI. This Policy and related SOPs apply to all activities undertaken by TGI which involve children and adolescents.

This policy conforms to the references provided in Section 6 below and any other legal requirements and applicable child-related statutes, by-laws, rules, regulations and orders by local jurisdiction that may be in effect in due course.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **“Adolescents”** are defined as those between the ages of 10 and 19 years.¹
- **“Child/Children”** in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and for the purposes of this Policy, is defined as any person - girl, boy, adolescent woman, adolescent man, and children of other gender identities - under the age of 18 years¹.
- **“Child Abuse”** means any kind of maltreatment inflicted on a child including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.
- **“Collaborators”** are those who work with or are associated with TGI or its entities contractually.

- **“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 and adolescents. This also refers to ambiguous behaviours that are potentially inappropriate for children and adolescents to be exposed to but may not necessarily be indicators of abuse occurring. The sharing of inappropriate jokes may be an example.
- **“Misconduct”** – behaviours and/or act that can harm a child and adolescents emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or negligent treatment, commercial or sexual exploitation resulting in harm to a child’s health, survival, or dignity, constitute a breach of TGI’s ‘Working with Children and Adolescents and Code of Conduct
- **“Criminal conduct”** – conduct that, if proven, would constitute a criminal offence.
- **“Emotional Abuse”** includes acts or omissions by parents or caretakers that have caused or could cause distress, serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional, or mental trauma to the child. Actions of emotional abuse include restricting movement, belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.
- **“Exploitation”** means using a child for work or other activities benefiting others. It includes child labour and child prostitution. Such activities are harmful and detrimental to the child’s mental and physical health, and over-all development.
- **“Neglect/ Negligent Treatment”** is persisting failure to protect a child from dangerous situations, or the extreme failure to perform important aspects of care, medical or physical which results in the significant impairment of the child’s health and development.
- **“Physical Abuse”** means use of violence upon a child that may result in physical injury to the child or causing physical injury upon a child and includes but is not limited to burning, hitting, punching, kicking, beating or otherwise injuring a child.
- **“Gender Responsive Safeguarding”** is a safeguarding approach that takes full account of gender in considering the specific safeguarding needs of girls, boys, and other gender identities.
- **“Sexual Abuse”** constitutes a sexual offence under child-related statutes, by-laws, rules, regulations and orders by local jurisdiction as amended from time to time. Sexual Abuse includes penetrative sexual assault, aggravated penetrative sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, sexual harassment or use of a child for pornographic purposes defined.
- **“Staff”** means a person employed at TGI and all its related entities on regular, temporary, ad hoc or daily wage basis, either directly or through an agent, including a contractor, with or without the knowledge of the principal employer, whether for remuneration or not, or working on a voluntary basis or otherwise, whether the terms of employment are express or implied, and includes a co-worker, a contract worker, probationer, trainee, apprentice, intern, volunteer or called by any other such name.

- **“Visitors”** means people who are not staff or collaborators, who will be in contact with children, during their visit to a TGI office, related entities, project or activity for any reason whatsoever.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The welfare of children and adolescents will always be given first priority. All children and adolescents participating in TGI projects and activities are to feel safe and be safe, therefore all child and adolescent -related activities undertaken by TGI, is committed to abiding by the following principles:

- **Right to safety and participation** by supporting meaningful participation of children and adolescents by providing full and transparent information about their rights and the activities, as well as listening to opinions and acting on their feedback including providing assist where appropriate early intervention to prevent problems developing further.
- **Respect of all children and adolescents** by treating all children, adolescents, their families and communities, with their diverse needs and perspectives and respecting personal dignity.
- **All children and adolescents have equal rights** to protection from all forms of harm or violence.
- **Engaging with children, adolescents, families and communities** through providing clear and accessible information by adapting and responding to different learning and communication styles and languages based on age, gender, race, culture, belief, vulnerability, sexuality or physical ability to build cultural safety, trust and respectful relationships.
- **Ensuring TGI engages suitable people** and have relevant checks to be able to work with children and adolescents, and are supported and trained in implementing child safe practices and wellbeing values when interacting with children and adolescents.
- **Ongoing education and training** of TGI staff on safety, and wellbeing (including cultural safety) ensuring they are equipped with the knowledge and skills through education and awareness. Providing the children and adolescents with specific training on relevant topics including education and awareness to equip them in the ability of self-protection, and specific areas for those under 18 years old. Some examples of topics may include but not limited to mental health awareness, alcohol and drugs information, safety and protection from violence. Injury and prevention, healthy lifestyle and peer relationships.
- **Ensuring a child friendly and adolescent friendly work culture**, that fosters a culturally safe environment that allow for the physical and mental development of children and adolescents.
- **Adopting a continuous improvement process** for children and adolescent related policies and procedures with a review at least every 2 years with mandatory training following updates.

- **Reporting and responding to complaints**, suspected abuse and neglect, including reporting of inappropriate behaviour around children and adolescents; and
- **Maintaining a children and adolescent focus feedback, complaint and concerns process** that uphold the rights of the individual, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and adolescents.

5. RESPONSIBILITES

As an organisation, TGI will ensure:

- a process for receiving and managing of all feedback, concerns and complaints that is child friendly and accessible to children and adolescents and their families;
- the maintenance of privacy and confidentiality throughout the management of any complaints process, to the extent permitted by law;
- all staff, children and visitors are aware of TGI's commitment to being a child and adolescent safe organisation and their responsibilities and associated project activity procedures; and
- all staff, collaborators and visitors working with children and adolescents are required annually to review and confirm their understanding and compliance with this policy.
- all staff, collaborators and visitors are aware and in compliance with TGI Working with Children and Adolescent Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Safeguarding Practice.

All staff, collaborators and visitors will:

- abide by the TGI Policy, procedures and codes of conduct when working with children and adolescents.
- report and respond to concerns or breaches of this policy or suspicion of circumstances detrimental to the safety of children and adolescent. Reporting should be in line with TGI procedures and child-related statutes, rules and regulations of the region or area where the child or adolescent is residing.
- not act or behave in a manner that will result in violence or harm against a child or adolescent or places a child or adolescent at risk of harm or violence.
- always maintain an environment which is safe and prevents violence against children and adolescents.
- always maintain a physical and online environment that promotes safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and adolescent to be harmed.

Where child-related activities are conducted in conjunction with TGI's partner organisations, TGI will work with those organisations to address child safety related issues collaboratively. All contracts, agreements, children and /or adolescent projects, assignments, work orders and etc. pertaining to children and adolescents which is executed with TGI will constitute the following text:

“The Second Party (enter the description of the party with whom TGI executes the contract) shall abide by all the terms and conditions mentioned and described in TGI “Working with Children and Adolescent Policy”

6. REFERENCES

The following laws and resources are relevant to the implementation of this Policy, have informed the principles in this Policy and/or can be referred to for additional information for the relevant jurisdiction:

Global	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights
India	National Policy for Children, 2013
India	National Child Protection Policy, 2018
India	The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences 2012 (referred to as POSCO Act)
China	Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Minors 2020
Australia	Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW) National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National)
United Kingdom	Children Act 1989 and 2004 Children and Families Act 2014

7. REVISION HISTORY

Version number	Replaces	Reason / description of change
V5.0 (18012024)	V4.0	Rename Working with Children and Adolescents Policy Updates to be in line with on legislation changes.
V4.0 (14082020)	V3.0	Updated to safeguard vulnerable people
V3.0 (25072020)	V2.0	Updated Policy format and refresh
V2.0 (01072020)	V1.0	Revised to new Policy format
V1.0 (01012013)	N/A	First version

8. APPROVAL

Title of Owner: Chief Scientist	David Peiris
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