



# **GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE (GSK INITIATIVE)**

## **SAFE GUARDING POLICY**



# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE.**

The nature of the work of **Global Support For Kids Initiative** means this organization works collaboratively with a vast number of different organizations and agencies,

**Safeguarding** is the responsibility of that **Global Support For Kids Initiative** to ensure that their employees and volunteers, partners, vendors, operations and programmes do no harm to children, young people or vulnerable children and that they do not expose them to the risk of discrimination, neglect, harm and abuse; and that any concerns the organization has about the safety of vulnerable people within the communities in which they work, are dealt with and reported to the management. It is also the responsibility of the Global Support For Kids Initiative in protecting its employees and volunteers when they are vulnerable, for example, when ill or at risk of harm or abuse.

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY:** To ensure the safety, well-being and prevention of all forms of child abuse and take swift and appropriate actions should an incident or concern arise.



## **AIMS and OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY**

- To promote and ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable children directly served by **Global Support For Kids Initiative**
- To ensure that any abuse of vulnerable children that occurs in the context of **Global Support For Kids Initiative's** projects and programmes is reported and addressed with immediate effect.

## **MANAGEMENT TEAM**

- Ensuring all new employees receive policy training as part of their induction.
- Ensuring measures are implemented within their area of responsibility.
- Following up and addressing issues appropriately.
- Discussing safeguarding matters at Staff General Meetings at periodic intervals to help ensure progress and address any challenges with implementing the policy and any cases arising.
- Presenting an annual safeguarding report on any instances and action taken/lessons learned to the Board.
- Ensuring awareness raising/training is undertaken for staff and stakeholders



## **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy applies at all times, including both the professional and personal lives of these people, while they are engaged with work or visits relating to **Global Support For Kids Initiative**. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** staff should not allow any form of child abuse, maltreatment or poor **Safeguarding practice**. A child is anyone under the age of 18, and all children have an equal right to protection regardless of any personal characteristic, including their age, gender, ability, culture, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity.

This policy applies to all persons working for us or on our behalf in any capacity, including employees at all levels, directors, staff, and volunteers. It applies during or outside of working hours, every day of the year.

As outlined, all staff members, volunteers, interns, consultants, members and partners of **Global Support For Kids Initiative** are expected to uphold and take forward the standards and procedures set out in this document. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** will ensure it's disseminated to all those under this scope and request a signed Declaration of Acceptance This also involves existing and future service providers.



## **POLICY COVERING VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

- All children below the age of eighteen years (**18yrs**) should be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and adheres to the fundamental rights of the child as spelt out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989.
- Vulnerable Children (Youth at Risk) over the age of eighteen years who cannot be or protect themselves against harm or exploitation for whatever reason, require particular protection.
- Both children and vulnerable children have rights as individuals and shall be treated with dignity and respect.

## **TRAINING AND AWARENESS**

Training and Awareness are very powerful ways to improve practice. It All those employed or engaged by the organization must have access to regular training on child safeguarding that is appropriate for their role and responsibilities, beginning at the induction/orientation stage.

## **PROTECTING OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

- A. GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE** staff, Board members and volunteers shall adhere to the following principles:



- i. All Vulnerable Children have rights as individuals, without discrimination of any kind and irrespective of race, colour, gender, language, religion, nationality, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.
- ii. All Vulnerable Children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- iii. All Vulnerable Children will be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities shall be challenged.
- iv. The welfare of Vulnerable Children should be safeguarded and promoted.
- v. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** Staff has a collective responsibility to support the care and protection of Vulnerable Children/youth at Risk.
- vi. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** working with partners has a responsibility to protect the Vulnerable Children involved in their partners' programmes.

**B. Global Support For Kids Initiative** staff shall strive to make **Global Support For Kids Initiative's** activities safe and care for all people, and in particular Vulnerable Children:

- i. Which include the health, safety and welfare of Vulnerable Children have been assessed and catered for;
- ii. In which staff are aware of the possibility of abuse and take reasonable measures to prevent that possibility; and
- iii. Where there is a sound and known reporting system for any incident.



C. Activities undertaken by **Global Support For Kids Initiative** shall be planned, organized and delivered following the principles of **Global Support For Kids Initiative's** Policy for Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children. ( **Nigeria**)

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE**

**Global Support For Kids Initiative** therefore will:

- i. Ensure Staff and partners are expected to follow the **Child Rights Global Support For Kids Initiative Safeguarding Policy and Procedure** for any joint activities or projects being implemented, and to sign an agreement of joint procedure. If a member or partner wishes to follow its child safeguarding policy and procedure, this will be agreed to by the **Child Safeguarding (Child Protection Officer)** and the agreement of joint procedure will be modified accordingly.
- ii. A written agreement specifying a joint commitment to safeguarding children will be issued and signed both by **Global Support For Kids Initiative** and any partners collaborating on activities involving children.
- iii. Actively promote its Policy for Safeguarding of Vulnerable children by making the Policy publicly available through the **Global Support For Kids Initiative website (www.gskinitiative.org)**
- iv. Provide relevant guidance to **Global Support For Kids Initiative** partners, aimed at the safeguarding of Vulnerable Children.



## **PROCEDURE OF IMPLEMENTING GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE SAFEGUARDING POLICY WITH PARTNERS**

a. Global Support For Kids Initiative expects the staff to be alert to signs that may suggest Vulnerable children who are at risk of abuse or exploitation. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** also expects the employees of **GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE** partners to adopt the same approach.

b. **Global Support For Kids Initiative** shall treat any allegation regarding the abuse of Vulnerable Children seriously. In following the reporting procedure, particular care shall be taken concerning an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality when information is shared with appropriate people in the course of following up an allegation.

c. To facilitate reporting, **Global Support For Kids Initiative** has designated a **Safeguarding Officer(Child Protection Officer)**, who shall be responsible for ensuring that the Policy for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children is implemented and followed.

### **The role of the Safeguarding Officer is to:**

- a. Receive and register reports of abuse of Vulnerable Children from **Global Support For Kids Initiative** staff or staff of **Global Support For Kids Initiative's** partners.
- b. Collect additional information as appropriate.
- c. Assess risk.
- d. Consult with **Global Support For Kids Initiative's** leadership, legal staff, programme staff and Country Managers as appropriate.





- e. After consulting with external organizations including partners, local agencies, and community leaders.
- f. Make a formal referral if appropriate to **Global Support For Kids Initiative Program Officer** and Global Support For Kids Initiative's partners

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All employees, volunteers and partner organizations and visitors are obliged to follow this policy and maintain an environment that prevents exploitation and abuse and which encourages reporting of breaches of this policy using the appropriate procedures.

### **All People Working With Global Support For Kids Initiative Will:**

- i. Read, understand and adhere to the Global Support For Kids Initiative Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct Policy
- ii. Strive to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse in all working environments
- iii. Strive to develop relationships with all stakeholders which are based on equality, trust, respect and honesty
- iv. Place the safety and welfare of children, vulnerable children and youth at risk above all other considerations
- v. Report any concerns they may have about the behaviour of a Global Support For Kids Initiative staff in safeguarding.



## **All People Working With Global Support For Kids Initiative Will Not:**

- i. Sexually harass, assault or abuse another person
- ii. Physically harass, assault or abuse another person
- iii. Emotionally abuse another person, such as engaging in behaviour intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade
- iv. Condone, or participate in behaviour which is abusive, discriminatory, illegal, or unsafe
- v. Develop relationships with children or vulnerable children which could in any way be deemed sexual exploitative or abusive
- vi. Act in ways that may be violent, inappropriate or sexually provocative
- vii. Agree with a child to keep a secret which has implications for their safety or the safety of other children.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION.**

- i. Advertisements for all positions within the organization will bear statements affirming its child safeguarding principle
- ii. All prospective employees, volunteers and board members will be informed of the agency's child safeguarding policy. They will be asked to sign a declaration of criminal convictions as part of the application process under-listed listed checks will be obtained and verified
  - a. minimum of two character reference checks
  - b. police checks
  - c. previous work experience checks



- iii. Staff, volunteers and board members will receive training about the organization's child safeguarding policy. They will be given a copy of the policy and will be required to sign a declaration that they received and understood.
- iv. Visitors (including independent contractors) will be brief about the organization's child safeguarding policy.
- v. All descriptions/terms of reference will bear a statement on the organization's child safeguarding policy in addition to clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- vi. As part of the documentation for new employees, the following will be required;
  - a. international passport/ driver's license/ national id card
  - b. relevant educational credentials/ qualification
  - c. medical certificate of fitness
  - d. self-declaration of no criminal record
  - e. two references
- vii. All staff and volunteers will undergo Bi-annual training in child safeguarding policy
- viii. Appointment to all positions in the organization will be subject to a minimum probation period of three months.

## **COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA**

**This section on the use of images is an integral part of the Global Support For Kids Initiative's child safeguarding policy.**

In our use of visual images both photographic stills and videos, our overriding principle is to maintain respect and dignity in our portrayal of children, families and communities.

**In our use of visual images, we commit ourselves to the following;**

- a. Consent for taking and using photographs and case studies will be sought from parents and those with parental responsibility or children directly when they are of sufficient age and understanding.
- b. we do not exploit or manipulate the children in ways that distort the reality of their situation
- c. We protect the confidentiality of children and their families and if necessary, their names will be changed
- d. We will maintain the dignity of all children especially those with special needs.
- e. We avoid stereotypes and aim not to portray children as victims
- f. We do not fabricate images or use them in ways that deliberately misrepresent the situations
- g. We do not use images that are erotic, pornographic, obscene or of dead bodies
- h. We do not allow gratuitous use of images of extreme suffering
- i. Employees and others (volunteers, visitors and interims) who come in contact with children should never:
  - a. Give preferential treatment to any child (e.g. buying gifts).
  - b. Use any form of physical 'punishment' including hitting, physical assault and physical abuse.
  - c. Enter into any form of sexual or immoral relationship with a child.

- d. Engage in any form of inappropriate or culturally unacceptable physical behaviour such as kissing, fondling, hugging, or suggestively touching a child.
- e. Use language, dress or act in a physically or sexually provocative and inappropriate manner towards children.
- f. act in a manner, organize or approve activities which are abusive or place a child at risk of abuse
- g. stay alone with a child/children whether in staff accommodation, project premises or elsewhere
- h. Invite a child or children to their place of residence or stay overnight alone in a room with a child.
- i. Do things for children of a personal nature that they are capable of doing by themselves.
- j. Use children and/ or their situations as objects of a joke in their interaction with others.
- k. Hire children as “house helps” or provide shelter for rescued children in their homes.
- l. Be found in a compromising or vulnerable position with a child (the adult will be considered responsible even if the child behaves seductively).
- m. Fight quarrel with another adult in the presence of children.
- n. Delay in acting on cases that are reported to them.
- o. Label a child with names, bed-wetter, dullard, prostitute etc.
- p. Make comments on child safeguarding issues to the media/ public that could undermine the safety of child/ children



## **GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR KIDS INITIATIVE CODE OF CONDUCT**

- i. Our child's best interest the child is paramount in all decisions concerning him/ her.
- ii. Treat children with respect and dignity irrespective of ethnicity sex, ethnicity, religious background or disability.
- iii. avoid situations in which children are outside the scope of adult supervision
- iv. Ensure that contact with children takes place in an open and accessible place and two-adult two – adult rules' (supervision by at least two adults at a time) and where this is impossible, a suitable alternative arrangement should be made available.
- v. Identify and avoid compromise or sing and/or suspicious situations which might lead to accusations of improper behaviour/ conduct.
- vi. Beware that physically handling a child (e.g. hugging, holding or touching) perhaps to offer misconstrued by observers or the child.
- vii. Organize awareness discussions with children on their basic rights and responsibilities.
- viii. Protect the integrity, dignity and identity of the children we work with.
- ix. Ensure that the consent of the child is sought and obtained before obtaining data and should be done in a friendly environment.
- x. identify their limits and ensure referrals where necessary
- xi. Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- xii. Seek and respect the opinion of the child at all times.
- xiii. Respect the child's norms, culture, tradition and religion at all times.
- xiv. Ensure that children participate in decisions that concern them.