

## Safeguarding Policy

### 1. Introduction

#### About Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care (TECEC)

Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care (TECEC) is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for children attending our programs and activities. We prioritize the protection and well-being of all children, believing that every child deserves to grow up in a safe and secure environment. This Child Safeguarding Policy outlines our commitment, procedures, and guidelines to ensure the safety and protection of children in our care.

### 2. Definitions

- a) **Child:** Any person under the age of 18.
- b) **Staff:** Employees, volunteers, trustees, consultants, or any individual associated with Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care (TECEC).
- c) **Safeguarding:** Actions taken to ensure the safety, protection, and well-being of children.
- d) **Abuse:** Any act that harms or threatens to harm a child, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect.

### 3. Policy Objectives

- a) To provide a safe and secure environment where children can learn and develop without any risk.
- b) To protect children from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- c) To create awareness among staff and stakeholders about child safeguarding principles and practices.
- d) To establish and implement appropriate procedures for the recognition, recording, and reporting of concerns or allegations of child abuse or misconduct.

### 4. Recognition of Abuse

- a) **Forms of Abuse:** Abuse can take various forms, including but not limited to:
  - . **Physical Abuse:** Inflicting physical harm or injury.
  - . **Emotional Abuse:** Causing emotional damage through verbal abuse, rejection, or neglect.
  - . **Sexual Abuse:** Engaging a child in sexual acts or exploitation.
  - . **Neglect:** Failing to provide for a child's basic physical and emotional needs.
- b) **Signs of Abuse:** Staff and volunteers are trained to recognize signs of abuse, including unexplained injuries, changes in behavior, fear of specific individuals, and significant changes in emotional well-being.

## 5. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

a) Everyone associated with Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care (TECEC) has a responsibility to report any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment immediately.

### b) Step-by-Step Response Protocol:

- **Recognize Concern:** Identify signs of potential abuse or neglect.
- **Document:** Record details of the concern, including dates, times, and descriptions of observed behaviors.
- **Report:** Inform the designated Child Safeguarding Officer without delay.
- **Investigation:** The Child Safeguarding Officer will handle the report confidentially, ensuring that all allegations are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated following established procedures.
- **Action:** Based on the investigation outcome, necessary actions will be taken to ensure the child's safety, which may include reporting to appropriate authorities and providing support to the child.

c) Remote reporting can also be done through the toll-free number 116.

## 6. Responsibilities

a) **Board of Trustees:** The Board will oversee the implementation and review of this policy, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

b) **Management:** The organization's management is responsible for fostering a culture that prioritizes child safeguarding and ensuring effective implementation.

c) **Staff and Volunteers:** All staff and volunteers must uphold this policy, report concerns, and actively participate in safeguarding training and activities.

## 7). Engaging at the Child's Level

All staff, volunteers, and visitors involved in child-related programs must strive to engage with children at their level, physically, emotionally, and developmentally—when interacting with them. This includes:

- Using child-friendly language and tone.
- Physically positioning oneself at the child's eye level during conversations (e.g., kneeling or sitting if appropriate).

- Demonstrating warmth, respect, and empathy through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Actively listening to children's views, concerns, and experiences.
- Adjusting communication style to match the child's age and understanding.

This approach should be especially observed during field visits or community activities, ensuring that every interaction upholds dignity, trust, and safety for the child. Creating a supportive and relatable atmosphere helps build meaningful connections and reinforces a child-centred safeguarding environment.

## **8. Recruitment and Screening**

- a) Thorough background checks will be conducted before hiring any staff or accepting volunteers, including verifying references, prior experience, and conducting criminal record checks in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.
- b) All staff and volunteers will be required to provide updated contact information, complete and sign a Child Safeguarding Declaration Form, and undergo regular training.

## **9. Staff Training and Awareness**

- a) All staff and volunteers will receive training on child safeguarding principles and procedures during induction.
- b) Regular training will be provided to ensure staff possess the necessary knowledge and skills to identify signs of abuse, respond appropriately, and report concerns.
- c) Awareness-raising activities will be conducted to ensure all stakeholders understand the importance of child safeguarding and their role in creating a safe environment for children.

## **10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- a) All information regarding concerns, allegations, or investigations will be treated confidentially and shared only with individuals involved in the investigative process.
- b) Only individuals with a need to know will have access to confidential information, always considering the child's best interests and adhering to legal and ethical obligations.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

- a) This policy will be reviewed every three years or as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective.
- b) Records of staff training, reported concerns, and any actions taken will be maintained to assist in monitoring and evaluating the policy's effectiveness.

## **12. Policy Dissemination**



# TECEC

*Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care*

**Help every child to thrive in Tanzania**

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**+255 757 755 228**

- a) This Child Safeguarding Policy will be made available to all staff, volunteers, parents, and stakeholders connected with Tanzania Early Childhood Education and Care (TECEC).
- b) The policy will be posted on the organization's website, displayed in prominent areas, and included in staff and volunteer handbooks.

## Child Safeguarding Declaration Form

Name of Staff/Volunteer/Consultant/Visitor: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the undersigned, understand and acknowledge that I have a responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of children during my engagement with the organization named above. I am fully committed to upholding the principles and practices of child safeguarding and will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. I will treat all children with respect and dignity, promoting their well-being and best interests at all times.
2. I will follow the organization's child safeguarding policy and procedures, which include reporting any concerns or incidents of child abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behavior immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer.
3. I will undergo a background check and reference check as required by the organization before starting my role.
4. I will maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and will not engage in any behavior that could be considered harmful, exploitative, or abusive.
5. I will participate in the organization's child safeguarding training and other relevant capacity-building programs to enhance my understanding of child protection, including recognizing signs of abuse, responding to disclosures, and understanding my roles and responsibilities.
6. I will comply with all local laws and regulations regarding child protection, reporting, and safe practices.



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7. I will adhere to the code of conduct provided by the organization, respecting the rights and privacy of children, and refraining from any form of discrimination, harassment, or violence.
8. I will maintain confidentiality regarding any information about children that comes to my knowledge during my engagement.
9. I will immediately report any suspicions or concerns about potential child abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behavior to the designated Child Protection Officer, following the organization's reporting procedures.
10. I understand that a breach of any child safeguarding policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, including termination of my engagement with the organization, and may also lead to legal consequences.

By signing below, I affirm that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Organization's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Signature, \_\_\_\_\_

Date, \_\_\_\_\_