



Child Protection Policy

1. Purpose, Scope and Audience

The purpose of TAAF's Child Protection Policy is to provide a framework for ensuring that children (defined as any human being under the age of 18 years, are protected from all forms of abuse and exploitation in all TAAF operations, activities and programs.

- Responsibilities

This Policy applies to all personnel that are engaged by TAAF, including its Staff, Suppliers, Donors, Volunteers and Consultants. It also defines expectations from the relevant stakeholders with regard to child protection.

2. Background

TAAF recognizes that children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and that all children, inclusive of children experiencing mental health conditions,, have the right to be safe and protected.

TAAF acknowledges that preventing violence against, and abuse and exploitation of, children is a shared responsibility, and that prevention is paramount to child protection.

TAAF is committed to protecting children from exploitation and abuse regardless of their nationality, culture, ethnicity, gender, religious or political beliefs, socio-economic status, family or criminal background, physical or mental health or any other factor of discrimination.

TAAF is also committed to providing a safe environment for any child with whom she comes in contact, through implementing child-safe practices within its culture, programs and activities, policies and procedures.

This Policy is to be known and understood by all personnel and implemented at all levels. TAAF is committed to ensuring that it, and anyone in contact with children in connection with the activities and programs of TAAF, abides by national and international legislation relevant to child protection.

3. Key principles on child protection

TAAF considers the following four principles, included in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), as paramount for the protection of the rights of the child:

- The right of all children to survival and development;
- The best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all decisions relating to children;
- The right of all children to express their views freely; and
- The principle of non-discrimination.

TAAF is committed to:

- Upholding the rights of children and its obligations under the UNCRC (in particular Article 19 of the said Convention¹)
- The safety and best interests of all children accessing our services and programs or involved in campaigns, voluntary support, fundraising, work experience (regardless of the child's gender, ability or background) and, in particular, to minimizing the risk of abuse.

- Enhancing the protection of children in planning, implementation and assessment of activities and seeking ways to incorporate the voices of children in shaping the projects and activities that affect them.

TAAF will not engage in, or allow its funds to be used in, any practice inconsistent with the rights set forth in this policy as guided by the UNCRC.

3.1 Zero tolerance of violence against children and child exploitation and abuse

TAAF:

1. Strongly reaffirms that violence against children, child exploitation and abuse are never acceptable, in any form, location or setting, and that they have damaging and often long lasting repercussions for children, their families and their communities.
2. Will be responsible for protecting children from abuse of all kinds in the delivery of its programs and activities.
3. Does not tolerate child exploitation and abuse, as such actions justify criminal, civil and disciplinary sanctions.
4. Will not knowingly engage, directly or indirectly, anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing, and will not permit any such person to work, or have contact with, children.
5. Works to reduce the risks of child exploitation and abuse associated with delivering aid activities and trains its personnel on their obligations.
6. Will not receive funds from any organization, group or individual where there are concerns that they may not meet TIF child protection compliance standards in their operations and activities
7. Will not use, in its information materials or promotional materials, images of children or information on children which might affect their dignity or affect their rights.

3.2 Sharing responsibility for child protection

To effectively manage risks to children, TAAF requires the commitment, support and cooperation of its suppliers and Partners implementing TAAF activities. They must formally acknowledge the key principles of this Policy and must comply with these principles (see template in Annex 4).

3.3 Risk management approach

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of child exploitation and abuse, careful management can reduce the risks to children that may be associated with all forms of abuse. Any child protection risk must be identified, managed and documented; during initial risk assessments and throughout the activity carried out by TAAF. TAAF provides guidance about ways to minimize risk to children. It has established standards of behavior which must be followed at all times when a person is in contact or working with children.

These standards are set out:

- In the Code of Conduct, which must be signed by any personnel contracted by TAAF, with the signed copy being kept in the files held by the Head Of Operations.

- In Part 5 of this Policy (Standards for acceptable/unacceptable behavior in relation to children). A failure to comply with this Policy and/or the Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action, legal action, and/or criminal investigation and prosecution.

3.4 Procedural fairness

TAAF uses fair and proper procedures when making decisions that affect a person's rights or interests. TAAF also expects its partners and employees to adhere to this principle when responding to concerns, procedures, activities or allegations of child exploitation and abuse.

4. Prevention of violence against children and child exploitation and abuse

The prevention of child exploitation and abuse by TAAF will be achieved through the following:

1. Internal communication and deployment of this Policy to all personnel, during onboarding of staff, volunteers, annual contract renewal with Suppliers.
2. Training of personnel: All personnel should be given the opportunity to discuss the implications of this policy and Child Protection in its entirety. TAAF provides training on child protection for its personnel, in order to ensure that the latter are fully aware of their responsibilities to protect the child amputees and how to report concerns or allegations about child exploitation and abuse;
3. This training, which can be done through the Learning Platform or other means as appropriate, will be mandatory for all personnel who will be in contact with children in the course of their duties;
4. Depending upon the functions of the personnel concerned, this training may be focused on awareness raising or may be more in depth.
5. Regarding the recruitment of all personnel whose functions will require them to work with, or have access to the children:

The new recruit will be subject to a criminal background check. If conducting this background check is not feasible, due to the context or the short duration of the contract:

- ❖ The personnel concerned should sign a statutory declaration stating that they have never been convicted of, are not currently suspected of, or are not being prosecuted for any offense involving
 - 3 any type of harm to a child or children, and declare that there is no element which could affect their suitability to work with children (see template in Annex 5);
- ❖ Careful consideration must take place about the appropriateness of the person working with TAAF. Qualifications and reference checks of former employers should be sought and interview plans for recruitment should incorporate behavioral-based interview questions.

5. Mechanisms of review of allegations

5.1 Code of Conduct and child protection against exploitation and abuse

The Code of Conduct, which must be signed by, and complied with, all personnel, includes several rules that are crucial to child protection against exploitation and abuse.

5.2 Report of breaches

All personnel who have reason to believe that a child may be exploited or abused, or that the safety or wellbeing of a child may be at risk, as a result of an action or inaction; have the obligation to report it as soon as possible to the relevant authority (Head Of Operations or the Executive Director).

Police authorities should be contacted as well, if circumstances and the possible seriousness of the acts require this.

All reports and concerns raised by both personnel and individuals in TAAF will be properly considered, documented, and treated seriously, with care, discretion and in a timely manner. TAAF will take all necessary steps against any form of retaliation suffered by personnel or other persons reporting possible breaches of this Policy.

Reports of child abuse and exploitation or violence against children committed by individuals who are not TAAF personnel and that are not committed in the context of TAAF activities should be reported to the police authorities: personnel doing so should be aware of the potential consequences of doing so; including for the safety of other children, and should discuss with the Head Of Operations and /or Executive Director.

5.3 Review of allegations

Any allegation of abuse and/or exploitation of children by personnel acting on behalf of TAAF will be examined against standards established by the Code of Conduct, this Policy and relevant national legislation.

TAAF is committed to ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children and their dignity and rights remain the overriding concern at all times; as a result, the risks incurred by children will be assessed by the Head Of Operations whenever it considers launching a disciplinary process and these risks will be monitored until that process is over.

If necessary, a plan of action to protect the child or children concerned will be established by the Head of Operations and Executive Director. Such a plan of action will include the following elements:

1. Report the matter to local police and/or the child protection authority whether or not required by law and/or
2. Ensure referral and support for the child (in terms of safety, health, psychological support, etc.); and/or
3. Manage internally in accordance with the processes mentioned below, if not a criminal matter. Any review of such allegations, including possible disciplinary processes, must respect the rights of the alleged victim(s) and alleged offender(s).

However, this does not preclude the suspension of the alleged offender, should not suspending the latter pose an unacceptable risk for the alleged victim and/or other children. Such suspension will be decided according to the relevant legal framework, with due respect for the presumption of innocence and the obligation to protect the rights and safety of the alleged victim and other potential victims.

Any act of child exploitation and/or abuse will be considered with the highest degree of severity. Any act of exploitation or abuse should lead to disciplinary measures and should lead to the termination of the contract

between the personnel and TAAF, in accordance with the relevant legal framework (the Code of Conduct, for Employees).

All reports made in good faith will be viewed as being made in the best interests of the child regardless of the outcomes of any investigation. A personnel who intentionally makes a false or malicious report will be subject to disciplinary action. A supplier who intentionally makes a false or malicious report may be subject to termination of contract.

6. Standards for acceptable/unacceptable behaviour in relation to children

In addition to the rules, all personnel must abide by the following standards concerning TAAF programs or activities involving child Amputees

- All activities involving children are supervised by personnel, in particular same-sex personnel if this enhances the protection of children. The number and gender-balance of personnel will be determined according to the sex, age and capacity of the children, and should always be sufficient with the necessary skills and qualifications consistent with the scope of work / role expected. Wherever possible, more than one adult should be present when working in the proximity of children;
- No activity or program is undertaken with children without the express written permission of their parents / guardians, or relevant authorities for street/unaccompanied children;
- Where TAAF arranges for visits, no child should be left unsupervised with a visitor to a program or event;
- In general, personnel are not allowed to work alone with a child somewhere that is secluded or where they cannot be observed. It is acceptable for personnel to work alone with a child where there are visibility panels / windows in doors. Efforts will be made to ensure that the lone personnel is the same sex as the child if this is considered to enhance the protection of the child in a given situation;
- Personnel should not invite unaccompanied children into the personnel's home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger and, in this case, the personnel involved should advise their supervisor of the need for such action;
- Personnel should not sleep on the same bed or sleeping space with unsupervised children unless absolutely necessary, in which case the personnel must obtain his/her supervisor's permission, and ensure that another adult is present, if possible the child's parent or guardian. In all cases, the personnel should be the same sex as the child/children;
- Personnel must use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or access child exploitation material through any medium;
- Personnel must not use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
- Personnel must not use physical punishment on any part of the body of the child;

- Personnel must comply with all relevant labour laws in relation to child labour;
- Personnel must not hire children for domestic or other labour which is inappropriate given their age or developmental stage, which interferes with their time available for education and recreational activities, or which places them at significant risk of injury;
- Personnel must immediately report concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse and Policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures and laws of the country;
- Personnel must immediately disclose all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offense, which occurred before or occurs during their association with the Foundation that relate to child exploitation and abuse;
- When photographing or filming a child or using children’s images for work-related purposes, the personnel must obtain informed consent from the child and parent or guardian of the child before photographing or filming a child.
 - ❑ As part of this, the personnel must explain how the photograph or film will be used; assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images before photographing or filming a child;
 - ❑ Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner.
 - ❑ Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
 - ❑ Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts;
 - ❑ Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

6. **Standards expected from contractors, suppliers and partners**

TAAF expects its contractors and partners to:

- Formally acknowledge and comply with the key principles of this Policy.
- Take immediate action, should the partner or contractor have reason to believe that an employee or any of their activities might be in breach of the above-mentioned key principles;
- Accept that any contract or agreement between TAAF and that contractor or partner might be terminated, should there be a serious or repeated breach(es) of the above mentioned key principles, and/or a failure to take appropriate action when a breach of these key principles is discovered;
- Accept that TAAF may raise with the contractor or partner issues of compliance with these key principles by the latter.
- Ensure best efforts to promote and enhance child protection amongst its personnel. The relevant provisions required for the implementation of the above obligations will be inserted in the relevant templates of contracts and agreements.

As part of its standard Terms and Conditions, TAAF expects the following from its suppliers and Partners:

- Not to be subject to a judgment that has force of Res Judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity;
- To guarantee respect of fundamental rights and not to be complicit in human rights abuses, including violence against children living with disability.
- Not to exploit child labour and forced labour and respect the basic social rights and working conditions in the countries involved.

8. Responsibility

Accountable	Activity
Executive Director	<p>Ensure that TAAF work protects ALL Children in general. Review and approve the Policy.</p> <p>Hold Employees, Partners and Suppliers accountable to this Policy and promote Policy principles, as appropriate.</p>
Head Of Operations	<p>Ensure TAAF policies and practices protect ALL children in general and that training is provided to all staff.</p> <p>Ensure there is periodic monitoring and tracking of compliance and implementation of the Policy.</p> <p>Promote awareness and understanding of the Policy among TAAF personnel, Suppliers and Partners</p> <p>Ensure personnel have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for their positions to support child protection.</p> <p>Ensure personnel are held accountable to the Policy Incorporate consideration of this policy in planning, budgeting and resource allocation.</p>

All Personnel Understand, advocate and apply the Policy to your work

9. Review of this Policy

This Policy is subject to regular review—at least every 3 years or earlier if warranted.

10. Abbreviations/Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
TAAF	Theodora Anavhe Adamu Foundation
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Annex 1 – Definitions

Concept	Meaning
Child	a human being under the age of 18 years
Child with Disability	A child living with one or more forms of impairments, disabilities
Adult	a human being aged 18 years or more

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Child Abuse	<p>One or more of the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical abuse 2. Sexual abuse 3. Emotional abuse 4. Neglect 5. Exploitation 6. Bullying 7. Harassment
Child Abuse Material	<p>Material that depicts (expressly or implicitly) a child as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse.</p>
Child Exploitation and Abuse	<p>One or more of the following;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child 2. possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material. 3. committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming

Child exploitation material	Material, irrespective of its form, which is child abuse material or child pornography material
Child pornography	(also known as “child abuse images”) any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.
Child pornography material	material that depicts a person, or is a representation of a person, who is, or appears to be, under 18 years of age and is engaged in, or appears to be engaged in, a sexual pose or sexual activity, or is in the presence of a person who is engaged in a sexual pose or activity, and does that in a way that a reasonable person would regard as being, in all the circumstances, offensive.
Child protection	an activity or initiative for the purpose of preventing or responding to a specific incident of child abuse
Child-safe practices	activities and measures which are taken to protect children from all types of violence, exploitation and abuse. Their design and implementation require an awareness of behaviors and activities that can be harmful to a child, and knowledge of protective behaviors that prevent all risks of child exploitation and abuse.

Contact with children	working or participating in an activity or in a position that involves contact, including online, with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.
Code of Conduct	the Code defining the duties and obligations of all TIF Staff, including Employees, and all individuals working under the TIF name.
Contractor	any person or organization working jointly with or providing services to TIF, including consultants and partner organizations.
Emotional abuse	a parent's or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts towards a child or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability whereby a child's self esteem and social competence is damaged
Employee	as a sub-category of SASHI Staff, any person having concluded an Employment Contract with TAAF..
Grooming	behavior that makes it easier for an offender to procure a child for sexual activity (including online grooming)

<p>Online grooming</p>	<p>the act of sending an electronic message with indecent content to a recipient who the sender believes to be under 18 years of age, with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person including but not necessarily the sender.</p>
<p>Neglect</p>	<p>the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and well-being</p>
<p>Partner</p>	<p>Any individual or organization with which TAAF is carrying out joint work or providing funds to deliver on agreed activities.</p>
<p>Personnel</p>	<p>any individual contracted by TAAF whatever his/her legal status (Employees, consultants, Supplier, Intern, volunteer...)</p>
<p>Physical abuse</p>	<p>the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behavior includes shoving, punching, hitting, beating, kicking, biting, burning, shaking, throwing, strangling and poisoning</p>

Sexual Abuse	the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or a significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviors can include fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing the child to, or involving the child in, pornography.
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Annex 2 – Key provisions of TAAF Code of Conduct related to child protection

The following rules apply to all personnel bound by that Code, and they state that the latter must not;

1. Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
2. Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
3. Develop relationships with children and young persons, which could in any way be deemed exploitative, oppressive or abusive.
4. Place themselves in a position where they could be accused of sexually abusing a child or young person, that is holding or hugging a child or young person, or physically touching children or young persons in a way that could be considered abusive or offensive in ways described in this document.
5. Spend excessive time alone with children away from others
6. Plan activities so that more than one person is present or, at least, other people are within sight and hearing. Wherever possible ensure that another adult is present to supervise the activity.
7. Take children or young persons alone in a car, even on short journeys.
8. Act in ways that may be abusive, oppressive, offensive or may place a child at risk of abuse.
9. Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
10. Offer benefits such as food, favours, clothes, jobs, money in exchange for sexual favours
11. Show favouritism to any individual child for sexual favours in return.
12. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
13. Plan and organise the event so that risks are minimised or eliminated
14. Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour, such as tantrums or crushes.
15. Adults should avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position. The adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively.
16. Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.

Annex 3 – Conventions and obligations

TAAF is committed to act in accordance with the standards set out by International Laws relevant to child protection. The international treaties and standards include:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989

This is the most significant international instrument that specifically addresses Child Protection.

The four main principles of the UNCRC are:

- The right of all children to survival and development
- Best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all decisions relating to children
- The right of all children to express their views freely
- Non-discrimination

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination, 1979 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2007

Annex 4 – Commitment by Suppliers

The Supplier hereby:

- Formally acknowledges and complies with the key principles described in Sections 3.1 to 3.5 of the attached Policy;
- Commits to take immediate action, should the supplier have reason to believe that an employee or any of their activities might be in breach of the above-mentioned key principles;
- Accepts that any contract or agreement between TAAF and the suppliers might be terminated, should there be a serious or repeated breach(es) of the above mentioned key principles, or a failure to take appropriate action when a breach of these key principles is discovered;
- Ensures best efforts to promote and enhance child protection amongst its personnel.

Annex 5 – Statutory Declaration By Personnel

I, undersigned, hereby confirm that to the best of my knowledge I have not been convicted of, am not currently suspected of, or am not being prosecuted for any offense involving any type of harm to a child or children in any country.

I declare that there is no element which could affect my suitability to work with children, and that I am aware of the seriousness of this declaration and that any erroneous declaration may be considered as gross misconduct.

Name:

Signature & Date:

