



**EDUCATING  
THE FUTURE**

## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Status Information**

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**EDUCATING  
THE FUTURE**

# Child Protection Policy

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## Child Protection Policy (CPP)

Policy number:	9	Version:	3
Drafted by:	Managing Director	Approved by Board on:	23/06/2020 (v3)
Responsible person:	Board of Directors	Scheduled review date	23/06/2022

### 1. Title of Policy

The Policy is the ***Educating The Future (ETF) Australia Child Protection Policy (CPP)***.

### 2. Introduction and Preamble

ETF recognises that, given the nature of its programs, interaction with children will occur, and has thus developed a Child Protection Policy to identify and mitigate potential child protection risks.

ETF's focus on infant schooling infrastructure, materials provision, community mobilisation and teaching requires the strict implementation and frequent review of its CPP.

### 3. Statement on Commitment to Child Protection

ETF is committed to the protection of children from harm, abuse, and exploitation. Children have a right to survival, development, protection and participation as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). ETF is committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure that all children and young people with whom we work are provided a child safe environment at all times.

This commitment is in accordance with the ACFID Commitment on Safeguarding Children which can be found here: <https://acfid.asn.au/content/commitment-14-we-advance-safeguarding-children>

### 4. Purpose of the Policy

The CPP has been developed to educate and inform those interacting with ETF of the organisation's commitment to ensuring a safe environment for children and to outline ETF's mechanisms for achieving that end.

As a supporter of ACFID's Code of Conduct, ETF is obliged to have policies and procedures implemented which promote the safety and well-being of all children accessing its services and programs, in particular to minimise the risk of abuse to children (See commitment 1.4 of the ACFID Code of Conduct).

### 5. Guiding Principles

ETF maintains the importance of its duty of care to children through its community capacity building mission and thus all members and partners must actively adhere to the organisation's CPP.

## 6. Definitions

- In this CPP:

**Child Protection** is the term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or stop children being abused or maltreated

**Child Abuse** includes physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying, child labour and family violence. Abuse can be inflicted on a child by both men and women, as well as by young people themselves and in some cases; professionals and other adults working with children in a position of trust also abuse children.

A **Child** is any person under the age of 18 years\*. (\*Timor-Leste adult age is 17)

**Duty of Care** refers to the responsibility of the organisation to provide children with an adequate level of protection against harm. It is the duty of the organisation to protect children from all reasonably foreseeable risk of injury.

**Physical abuse** refers to when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.

**Emotional abuse** refers to when a child is repeatedly rejected, or frightened by threats. This may involve name calling, being put down or continual coldness from parent or care giver; to the extent that it affects the child's physical and emotional growth.

**Neglect** refers to the persistent failure or the deliberate denial to provide the child with clean water, food, shelter, sanitation or supervision or care to the extent that the child's health and development are placed at risk.

**Sexual abuse** refers to when a child is used by an older or bigger child, adolescent or adult for his or her own sexual stimulation or gratification – regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. These can be contact or noncontact acts, including sexualised language, voyeurism, fondling genitals or breasts, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object and exposing a child to, or involving a child in pornography.

**Exploitation** refers to the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others that are to the detriment of the child's physical and mental health, education, or moral and social-emotional development. It includes, but is not limited to, child labour, child trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

*Definitions primarily influenced by*

[https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/resource\\_document/ACFID%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Guidelines%20for%20the%20Development%20of%20a%20Child%20Safeguarding%20Policy\\_Nov%202018.pdf](https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/resource_document/ACFID%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20Guidelines%20for%20the%20Development%20of%20a%20Child%20Safeguarding%20Policy_Nov%202018.pdf)

## 7. Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all Personnel and Associates:

- 'Personnel' refers to members of the following ETF teams:
  - Committee Members and Board Directors
  - Timorese volunteers
  - Student volunteers
  
- 'Associates' refers to:
  - Visitors to the programs
  - Supporters (donors, sponsors, advocates, ambassadors)
  - Trustees
  - Partners
  - External groups

## 8. Code of Conduct

ETF's Code of Conduct was developed to protect children, staff, and the organisation by providing clear behavioural guidelines and expectations.

All Personnel and Associates must sign this Code of Conduct which states that they shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the guidelines which follow:

### **I Will:**

- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children and young people
- Respect all children and treat them equally regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background and culture, economic status or criminal background.
- Report any concerns of child abuse or breach of the Child Protection Policy or this Code of Conduct according to the guidelines outlined in the Child Protection Policy
- Take responsibility for ensuring that I am accountable and do not place myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made
- Self-assess my behaviours, actions, language and relationship with children.
- Consult with Board members or other relevant staff if I have any questions regarding the Child Protection Policy.
- Comply with Child Protection Policy

### **I Will Not:**

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, degrade or exploit children.
- Use inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory language when speaking with a child.
- Do things of a personal nature toward a child who can do it for them/themselves, such as assisting with toileting or changing clothes.
- Take children to my accommodation or other private location, or sleep in the same room or bed as a child.
- Smack, hit or physically assault children.
- Involve children in sexual relationships.
- Develop relationships with children that may be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child
- Condone or participate in, behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.

- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children.
- Photograph, video or interview a child without the informed and documented consent of a local authority (pre-school teacher, Xefe, or parent)
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- Hire minors as domestic labour.
- Give any gifts to children.
- Provide any alcohol/drugs to children.

**WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING OR FILMING A CHILD, OR USING CHILDREN'S IMAGES FOR WORK-RELATED PURPOSES, I WILL:**

- Obtain informed and documented consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians before photography/filming using the ETF *'Marketing and Communications Consent Form'*
- Provide an explanation on how the photograph/film will be used
- 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.
- Images are honest representations of the context and 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
- Take care to ensure the local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images are adhered to before photographing or filming a child.

**9. Risk Management**

ETF understands that there are a range of potential risks in the delivery of our educational programs. In recognising these risks, ETF actively identifies, assesses and manages risks to children in order to reduce the risk of harm. The tables below highlight the processes of assessment and management for ETF's specific organisational risks.

**Table A: Risks in Timor-Leste**

<b>Activity</b>	Pre-School Visitation
<b>Practical Details</b>	Involves visiting ETF's pre-school facilities in Timor-Leste. Members involved include members of 'Personnel' and 'Associates'. This also extends to research field trips to other pre-schools, primary schools, high schools and Universities.
<b>Risks to children (likelihood, impact, severity)</b>	Medium. 1. Given the large number of people involved in surveying, opportunities for one-on-one environments are small. 2. Interaction with children with language barriers may create frustration or create opportunities for offensive behaviour towards children. 3. Close interaction in learning may provide opportunities for caring physical contact, which may be interpreted differently by children.
<b>Policies currently in place</b>	- Timor Code of Conduct - Working with Children's Check
<b>Action to</b>	Educational lesson at our regular briefing session

<b>reduce risk</b>	
<b>By Whom</b>	Programs team leader and Board members
<b>By When</b>	At least 2 weeks prior to departure

#### 10. Overview of Communication and use of Children’s Images Guidelines

ETF will always only use respectful and appropriate images of children in its publications. ETF will only publish photos of children where there has been explicit consent by at least one parent of the child. ETF’s *Marketing and Communications Consent Form* outlines the relevant procedure. This consent form and the ETF member will detail to the parents the way in which these images will be used for ETF’s communications and the communications channels in which they will be used in, such as social media or publications. It will also be explained that we cannot control the use of images once they are loaded onto the internet and that they can be viewed by anyone with internet access at any time.

ETF is also committed to ensuring that all images used for fundraising and communications will put the privacy safeguarding of the children as the priority. To do this ETF also follow the following guidelines when using images of children for communications:

- A child should always be portrayed 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.
- There should be no identifying information of the child used in the publication of images. This includes the child’s family name, community or school name.
- Children should not be portrayed in isolation; instead, they should be portrayed as part of their community.
- Local cultural traditions should be assessed regarding restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Images should be an honest representation of the context and the facts.
- When sending images electronically, file labels should not reveal identifying information.
- All photographers will be screened for their suitability, including police checks where appropriate.
- A risk assessment (with the child and their family) will be undertaken prior to the publishing of any information/story about an especially vulnerable child.
- A story about an especially vulnerable child will not show their face or any other identifying factors.
- Children should not be portrayed as weak, isolated and vulnerable. Images of children should portray them as resilient human beings and as partners in the development process.
- All images and information about children will be stored safely and will only be accessed by authorised personnel.

#### 11. Personnel Recruitment and Selection

ETF is committed to child safe recruitment, selection and screening practices.

The organisation's interaction with children occurs in Timor-Leste. The Timor-Leste program involves direct interaction with pre-school age children through the process of pre-school assessment and evaluation. Both Personnel and Associates must recognise the importance of safe child interaction.

To ensure child protection, ETF's recruitment process for all members requires potential Personnel and Associates to satisfy the following criteria:

- Provide information about educational professional background
- Undertake a face-to-face interview with ETF recruitment
- Read CPP and provide a signed copy of the Code of Conduct as outlined in Section. 9

Note:

- ETF does not require a Working With Children Check (WWCC) for Student Team members. Only members participating in the Timor-Leste volunteer experience will be required to undertake this.
- For certain roles, referees may be requested by ETF
- Student volunteers undertaking work in Timor-Leste must sign the Timor-Leste Volunteer Code of Conduct, which makes reference to the Child Protection Policy.

#### **Roles that may have contact with children:**

Currently within ETF the roles in which members may have contact with children are those members part of a Timor-Leste Trip team. These members are recruited from within the ETF organisation prior to a Timor-Leste trip. Therefore extra screening will be completed on these members before joining this team and travelling to Timor-Leste. Any future roles within ETF that has contact with children on a more regular basis will also be required to fulfil this extra screening prior to joining ETF. These screening requirements are:

- Criminal record checks before engagement; statutory declarations or local legal equivalent where criminal record checks are unavailable or unreliable
- Holds a valid Working With Children Check
- Has at least 2 verbal referee checks

#### **Roles where members work with children**

In roles where members work directly with children, they will be required to undertake additional screening on top of the ones stated above. In ETF there are currently no roles in which members work directly with children where contact is non-incident to activities. If ETF undertake any future roles, activities or programs, which will require members/candidates to work with children then these additional, screening requirements must be met:

- Behavioural-based questions will be used to ask for examples of the candidate's past behaviour and experiences. In positions working directly working with children, the panel will explore the candidate's motivations for working with children.
- Have at least 3 verbal referees including their most recent employer/supervisor.

## **12. Educating the Organisation on Child Abuse and the Child Protection Policy**

ETF recognises the importance of educating Personnel and Associates of its Child Protection Policy. The training of child safe practices is pivotal in eliminating the possibility of any infringements and provides an opportunity to reduce ambiguity about certain behaviour around children.

The training includes a detailed presentation of the CPP.

### 13. Working with Partners

In the context of ETF's policy, we define a *Partner* as:

“an organisation or company with whom an agreement is signed indicating a partnership”

ETF works with partners to ensure mutual understanding of child safeguarding practices. External compliance involves partners in both Australia and Timor-Leste.

In order to implement collaboration and understanding between ETF and partners, ETF leadership must present the 'ETF CPP' to potential partners, as well as receiving evidence of the partner's CPP. Each party must sign that they have read and understand the other's CPP. Any significant policy differences between ETF and the partner must be addressed, and each party sign their recognition of the differences. However despite these differences in ETF's partner must be bound by the principles and guidelines outlined in ETF's CPP, or must at least adhere to the minimum requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct Commitment 1.4. This process will be completed as follows

'ETF will exchange and acknowledge the exchange of Child Protection Policies. The Partner's Child Safeguarding/Protection Policy will then be sent to the Board and reviewed in our Ethical Partner Analysis.'

### 14. Programs that facilitate direct contact with children

ETF encounters direct contact with children through its Timor-Leste programs. Playful interaction with students, lessons given to the students, and the evaluation of Pre-Schools are the main components involved in ETF's overseas program. Programs such as these provide a level of contact with vulnerable children that could not normally take place. Consequently, there is the possibility of intentional or unintentional harm to students due to vagaries.

As an extension to the Code of Conduct, ETF recognises the need to implement specific guidelines to manage the child protection risks within its programs. Applicable to all Personnel and Associates attending the Timor-Leste program, these guidelines ensure that:

- Personnel and Associates receive a briefing of the Child Protection Policy, and provide a signed copy stating that they understand its contents.
- Personnel and Associates provide a signed Code of Conduct.
- Children should not be invited to leave or be taken away from the community unless there has been written consent by a parent. In the event of this occurring, there must be a minimum of 2 students together always.
- Any personal giving of gifts is banned, as it creates a power imbalance and may be used as a means of grooming.
- Personnel and Associates will not be permitted to stay with a child in their house/centre overnight unless there has been written consent, and there are a minimum of two students present always.

- At no point in time, an adult is to be left with an individual student at a location which is out of sight of the rest of the program members.

#### 17. Participation of Children

ETF is committed to the participation of children in the programs in which they are involved. The implementation of education related programs demands the participation and cooperation of children to engage in education which will permit them to develop the basic skills such as reading and writing and socialisation ability which will enable them to continue and thrive in education beyond preschool.

#### 15. Working in Emergency Contexts

Given that ETF's mission focuses on the development of educational facilities and support, emergency contexts are irrelevant to ETF's concerns. The organisation is not associated with the Timor-Leste population in the event of a humanitarian emergency.

ETF will only engage volunteers in a country that is declared by DFAT's Smart Traveller List as 'Not at Risk'.

#### 16. Responding to and Reporting Child Protection Concerns

ETF considers the abuse and exploitation of children to be completely unacceptable. We will take all concerns and reports of child abuse seriously and act on these reports immediately.

It is mandatory for all ETF Personnel, Associates and Partners to report any witnessed, suspected or alleged incidents of child abuse or any breach of the CPP and/or CoC.

These concerns may relate to a child or staff member involved in the organisation or a concern about a child or person/s outside of the organisations. If you do have a concern you should immediately follow ETF's child abuse reporting procedures.

##### **Who should report?**

All ETF Personnel, Associates and Partners; additionally, people in the wider community that we operate in.

##### **What should be reported?**

- Any disclosure, concern or allegation from a child, community member, Personnel, Associates and Partners regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child (this includes actual, suspected, or risk of abuse or harm to a child)
- Any observation or concerning behaviour exhibited by ETF Personnel, Associates or Partners that breaches the ETF Code of Conduct.

##### **When to report?**

Child abuse concerns should be raised immediately.

##### **Who to report to?**

The allegation will be automatically raised with the ETF Board to be assessed at the subsequent Board Meeting, or if required, an Extraordinary General Meeting if deemed extreme.

##### **How should it be reported?**

Verbally and by completing the 'ETF Child Abuse Incident Reporting Sheet' which can be found in the ETF Google Drive.

### **What will happen next?**

The Directors of ETF will discuss the allegations and then decide upon the next step. This may involve the following:

- Interviewing the person/persons who made the allegations and/or other witnesses to gather more information with which to make a decision about the allegation.
- Handling the concern internally if it is not a criminal matter.
- Reporting to local policy and or child protection authority when it is suspected or becomes clear that a crime has been committed.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a key principle of reporting and managing child protection concerns. All information regarding a child protection concern must only be shared with the designated CPO or directors. The names of people involved, and the details of the report will remain confidential. Information will only be realised when required by Australian or overseas law or when a report to police or child protection authorities is made.

### **Disciplinary action**

Disciplinary action will be taken against any Personnel, or Associate found to:

- Have failed to report a child protection concern
- Have intentionally made a false allegation
- Have made a serious breach of the CPP and/or CoC (minor breaches may result in action such as refresher training or increased supervision)

Disciplinary action may include the following sanctions:

- Proactive training
- Dismissal.
- Termination of relations including contractual and partnership agreements with ETF.
- Where relevant, reporting to authorities in country or in the home country of origin.

### **Responding to disclosure by a child**

When a child/young person tells you that he or she has been abused, they may be feeling scared, guilty, ashamed, angry and powerless. Those that have received this request, in turn, may feel a sense of outrage, disgust, sadness, anger and sometimes disbelief.

If a child discloses abuse, whatever the outcome, they child must be taken seriously. It is important for you to remain calm and in control and to reassure the child/young person that something will be done to keep him or her safe.

When a child or young person discloses they are being harmed you can show your care and concern for the child/young person by:

- Listening carefully
- Telling the child/young person you believe him or her

- Telling the child/young person it is not their fault and he/she is not responsible for the abuse
- Telling the child/young person you are pleased he/she told you.

You will not be helping the child/young person if you:

- Make promises you cannot keep, such as promising that you will not tell anyone
- Push the child/young person into giving details of the abuse. Your role is to listen to what the child/young person wants to tell you and not to conduct an investigation (beware of asking any leading questions as they may prejudice any subsequent investigation)
- Indiscriminately discuss the circumstances of the child/young person with others not directly involved.

#### 17. Involving Children and Young People

ETF works with children and their communities to raise awareness and commitment to children's rights by facilitating the establishment of quality educational foundations. By allowing students to experience a valuable infant education, ETF is fostering a desire for knowledge that will have a considerable impact on the intellectual prowess of Timor-Leste's future.

#### 18. Policy Review and Audit

ETF's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Directors.

**Signed by:**

Adam Alexander Hegedus

*Managing Director*

23/06/2020 (V3)

