



**EDUCATING  
THE FUTURE**

## **Child Protection Policy (CPP) 2021**

### **Status Information**

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# Child Protection Policy (CPP) 2021

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# Educating the Future: Child Protection Policy (CPP)

## 1. Title of Policy

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

1.1.1. Note: 'Educating the Future' and 'ETF' will be used interchangeably throughout the policy document, with both referring to the organisation.

## 2. Introduction and Preamble

- 2.1. Educating the Future is an Australian not-for-profit that endeavours to improve quality of life through the power of education. In order to achieve this mission, we connect Australian youth with the goal of constructing pre-schools in high-need areas of Timor-Leste. Established in 2016, Educating the Future remains a youth-led organisation with a commitment to the principles of transparency, accountability, ethicality and innovation. Educating the Future's engagement with children is incidental, building facilities that directly benefit children however we do not directly come into contact with children during the execution of our programs.
- 2.2. Educating the Future recognises its interaction with children as part of the organisation's community capacity building mission, and has thus developed a Child Protection Policy to identify and mitigate potential child protection risks that may lead to harm. Educating the Future's Child Protection Policy was written with reference to the recommendations from the Final Report by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the *United Nations Conventions on the Right of the Child* and recommendations from the Australian Council for International Development.
- 2.3. Educating the Future'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

- 3.1. Educating the Future 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)*.
- 3.2. Educating the Future is committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure that all children and young people who we work with are provided a child safe environment at all times. Educating the Future as an organisation concerned with children will adhere to Article III

of the *United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child* and will work towards what is best for each child.

3.2.1. Compliance with Educating the Future's Child Protection Policy is mandatory and applies to all Personnel and Associates, this covers all positions within Educating the Future and all Partners of Educating the Future.

3.3. Educating the Future has a nominated Child protection focal person, whose contact details can be found in the Policy Register or On Educating the Future's Website. The Child Protection Focal person can be contacted by external persons to report suspected or actual breaches of this policy, or suspected or actual child exploitation and abuse suspicions.

#### 4. Purpose of the Policy

- 4.1. The CPP has been developed to educate and inform those interacting with Educating the Future of the organisation's commitment and mechanisms to ensure a child safe environment.
- 4.2. As a supporter of ACFID's Code of Conduct, Educating the Future 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 Principle B.3.4 of the ACFID Code of Conduct).

#### 5. Guiding Principles

- 5.1. Educating the Future maintains the importance of its duty of child care through its community capacity building mission and thus all members and partners must actively adhere to the organisation's CPP. Child safety and protection is embedded in Educating the Futures leadership, governance, community and culture. Educating the Future will reflect on the shared responsibility to protect children from risk across all platforms and levels of the institution's activities.

#### 6. Definitions

- 6.1. Important to the discussion of child protection are definitions that must be made aware to stakeholders of Educating the Future so as they are to understand what child protection and abuse are.
  - In this CPP:

*Associates* include, but is not limited to, visitors to the program (including Media), supporters (e.g. donors, sponsors, advocates, ambassadors), trustees, partners and external groups.

*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. The *Care Act* defines child abuse as assaulting (including sexually assaulting) a child, ill-treating a child, exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that psychologically harms the child.

*A Child* is any person under the age of 18 years\*. (TIMOR-LESTE ADULT AGE IS 17)

*Duty of Care* is a common law concept that refers to the obligation of the organisation to provide children with a reasonable level of protection against reasonably foreseeable harm. It is the duty of the organisation to protect children from all reasonably foreseeable risk of physical injury, emotional harm or economic loss.

*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 caregiver; to the extent that it affects the child's physical and emotional growth.

*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.

*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.

*Partner* refers to an organisation or company with whom an agreement is signed indicating a partnership.

*Personnel* refers to, but is not limited to, Educating the Future committee members and Board Directors, Timor Volunteers and Australian Student's Participating in our International Policy.

**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.

**Risk of Significant Harm** is the likelihood that a young person or child may suffer physical, psychological or emotional harm as a result of what is done (physical, sexual or emotional abuse) or not done (neglect) to the child or young person by another person

**Significant**, a child or young person is at a risk of significant harm if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person are present to a significant extent. What is meant by 'significant' in the phrase 'to a significant extent' is that which is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.

**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.

## 7. Legal Framework

### 7.1. NSW LEGAL FRAMEWORK

#### 7.1.1. The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) 'Care Act'

provides a regulatory framework for the care and protection of, and the provision of services to, children and young persons. This act applies to children and young persons who live in New South Wales, or are present in New South Wales (*Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, s 4). A key object of the *Care Act* is for all institution, services and facilities responsible for the care and protection of children and young people to provide an environment for them that is free of violence and exploitation.

### 7.2. VICTORIAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK

#### 7.2.1. The *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005* applies to all Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children. It requires that seven standards are met

7.2.1.1. Standard 1: Strategies to embed a culture of child safety through effective leadership arrangements

7.2.1.2. Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

7.2.1.3. Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

7.2.1.4. Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing staff

- 7.2.1.5. Standard 5: Processes for responded to and reportin suspected child abuse
- 7.2.1.6. Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- 7.2.1.7. Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

### 7.3. WESTERN AUSTRALIA LEGAL FRAMEWORK

7.3.1. Western Australia does not currently have a legal framework specific to child protection.

7.4. Educating the Future personnel and associates legal responsibilities include

7.4.1. Mandatory reporting of children, if one has reasonable ground to suspect that a child is at a risk of significant harm, if the reasonable grounds arise during the course of ones work (s 27, the *Care Act*)

7.4.2. All adults are required to report child abuse to police unless there is a reasonable excuse not to report to police (*Crimes Act 1900* s 316A)

## 8. Code of Conduct

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

8.2. All Personnel and Associates shall conduct themselves in the 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 or partnering organisations.

### **I Won't:**

- 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 him/himself, 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.

8.3. Educating the Future maintains the right to suspend or transfer the duties of any personnel or associate who is under investigation of child abuse and have authority to dismiss any personnel or associate after an investigation.

## 9. Risk Management

9.1. Educating the Future understands that there are a range of potential risks in the delivery of our educational programs. In recognising these risks, Educating the Future actively identifies, assesses and manages risks to children in order to reduce the risk of harm.

9.2. Risk assessments must be carried out before all activities.

9.3. Annexed and Marked 'A' are risk assessment tables that highlight the processes of assessment and management for Educating the Future's specific organisational risks.

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

10.1. Educating the Future will always portray children in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way.

10.2. In the process of marketing and fundraising, Educating the Future recognises the importance of photographic, videography and informational content in illustrating program development and context for interested parties. Given the focus upon infant education as a key objective, a majority of photographic content will involve child students.

10.3. As a means of protecting Educating the Future from any legal vulnerabilities, consent must be provided by an adult carer and Chief of Village (Timor-Leste) in the event that their child is to be photographed. Educating the Future's *Information Release Form* outlines the following details:

- Educating the Future's use of Identity (Names, Ages, Locations)
- Educating the Future's intended audience for content (Social Media, Media, Organisation Documentation)
- Subject's right to review content and request removal

## 11. Personnel Recruitment and Selection

11.1. Educating the Future is committed to child safe recruitment, selection and screening practices. Checks on potential candidates are conducted for each country in which the individual has lived for 12 months or longer over the last 5 years, and for the individual's country of citizenship.

11.2. The organisation's interaction with children occurs in both Timor-Leste and Australia. The Timor-Leste program involves direct interaction with pre-school age children through the process of pre-school assessment and evaluation. The Australian events may involve interaction with children of a primary and high school age. Both Personnel and Associates must recognise the importance of safe child interaction.

11.3. To ensure child protection, Educating the Future's recruitment process requires potential Personnel and Associates to satisfy the following criteria:

11.3.1. Provide information about educational professional background

11.3.2. Undertake a face-to-face interview with ETF recruitment, where appropriate behaviour based interview questions will be used for child centric positions.

11.3.3. Read CPP and provide a signed copy of the Code of Conduct as outlined in Section. 9

11.3.4. Have a valid Working with Children's Check

11.3.5. Given the potential role for the applicant, referees may be requested by ETF for verbal reference checks for 'contact with children' positions

11.3.6. If the applicant poses an unacceptable risk to children, or fails to achieve the minimum standards of having a Working with Children's Check and positive referees, they will be prevented from working at Educating the Future.

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

- 12.1. Educating the Future 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.
- 12.2. The training includes a detailed presentation of the CPP at induction and annually thereafter.
- 12.3. Educating the Future's recruitment process provides semi-annual opportunities for applicants. Consequently, new recruits are trained upon selection. In the event that a member of Personnel or an Associate becomes involved with ETF outside the traditional recruitment timeframe, they must organise a meeting to receive the training.

### 13. Working with Partners

- 13.1. Educating the Future works with partners to ensure mutual understanding of child protective practices. External compliance involves partners in both Australia and Timor-Leste.
- 13.2. In order to implement collaboration and understanding between ETF and partners, ETF leadership must present the 'Educating the Future 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. This process will be completed as follows;
  - 13.2.1. 'Educating the Future will exchange and acknowledge the exchange of Child Protection Policies. The Partner's Child Protection Policy will then be sent to the Board and reviewed in our Ethical Partner Analysis.'

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

- 14.1. Educating the Future 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.
- 14.2. Educating the Future also encounters direct contact with children through its Australian fundraising events. Community participation in fundraising events is an essential function of ETF, and children have the potential to be included in the community attending these events. Events such as these provide personnel and associates potential to interact with a vulnerable child or young person that may not normally take place.

14.3. 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 Australian program, these guidelines ensure that:

14.3.1. Personnel and Associates receive a briefing of the Child Protection Policy, and provide a signed copy stating that they understand its contents.

14.3.2. Personnel and Associates provide a signed Code of Conduct.

14.3.3. Personnel and Associates must have a Working with Children's Check

14.3.4. 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.

14.4. Further guidelines have been implemented to for Personnel and Associates attending the Timor Leste Program, these guidelines function alongside the aforementioned;

14.4.1. Children should not be invited to leave or be taken away from the community unless these has been written consent by a parent. In the event of this occurring, there must be a minimum of 2 students together always.

14.4.2. Any external gifts or donations must be screened and approved before being handed over.

14.4.3. 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.

## 15. Working in Emergency Contexts

15.1. Given that Educating the Future'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.

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

## 16. Reporting Child Protection Concerns

16.1. Educating the Future considers the abuse and exploitation of children to be completely unacceptable. We will take all concerns and reports of suspected or actual child exploitation and abuse seriously and act on these reports immediately. All concerns and reports can be immediately directed to the Child Protection Focal Person, whose contact details are: [enewman@educatingthefuture.org](mailto:enewman@educatingthefuture.org).

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

16.3. 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.

**16.4. Who must report?**

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

**16.5. What must be reported?**

16.5.1. 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)

16.5.2. Any observation or concerning behaviour exhibited by ETF Personnel, Associates or Partners that breaches the ETF Code of Conduct.

**16.6. When to report?**

16.6.1. Child abuse concerns should be raised immediately.

**16.7. Who to report to?**

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

**16.8. How must it be reported?**

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

**16.9. What will happen next?**

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

16.9.1.1. 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.

16.9.1.2. Handling the concern internally if it is not a criminal matter.

16.9.1.3. Reporting to local police and or child protection authority when it is suspected or becomes clear that a crime has been committed.

16.9.1.4. Reporting the matter immediately to DFAT in cases where DFAT funding is involved

16.10. 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.

- 16.11. Disciplinary action will be taken against any Personnel, or Associate found to:
  - 16.11.1. Have failed to report a child protection concern
  - 16.11.2. Have intentionally made a false allegation
  - 16.11.3. Have made a serious breach of the CPP and/or CoC (minor breaches may result in action such as refresher training or increased supervision)
- 16.12. Disciplinary action may include the following sanctions:
  - 16.12.1. Proactive training
  - 16.12.2. Dismissal.
  - 16.12.3. Termination of relations including contractual and partnership agreements with ETF.
  - 16.12.4. Where relevant, reporting to authorities in country or in the home country of origin.
  - 16.12.5. Criminal Charges

## 17. Responding to a Disclosure by a Child

- 17.1. 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.
- 17.2. 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.
- 17.3. When a child or young person discloses, they are being harmed you can show your care and concern for the child/young person by:
  - 17.3.1.1 Listening carefully
  - 17.3.1.2 Telling the child/young person you believe him or her
  - 17.3.1.3 Telling the child/young person it is not their fault and he/she is not responsible for the abuse
  - 17.3.1.4 Telling the child/young person you are pleased he/she told you.
- 17.4. You will not be helping the child/young person if you:
  - 17.4.1. Make promises you cannot keep, such as promising that you will not tell anyone
  - 17.4.2. 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)
  - 17.4.3. Indiscriminately discuss the circumstances of the child/young person with others not directly involved.

## 18. Involving Children and Young People

18.1. Educating the Future 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, Educating the Future is fostering a desire for knowledge that will have a considerable impact on the intellectual prowess of Timor-Leste's future.

## 19. Policy Review and Audit

19.1. Educating the Future's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

### Signed by:

Adam Alexander Hegedus

*Board Member and Co-Chairman*



## APPENDIX 'A'

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

<b>Activity</b>	Pre-School Visitation
<b>Practical Details</b>	Involves visiting Educating the Future'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 reduce risk</b>	Educational lesson at our regular briefing session
<b>By Whom</b>	Programs team leader and Board members
<b>By When</b>	At least 2 weeks prior to departure

**Table B: Risks in Australia – Schools for Schools Program**

<b>Activity</b>	School Visitation
<b>Practical Details</b>	Involves Educating the Future Personnel or Associates visiting prospective schools in Sydney, Wollongong, Perth and Melbourne to conduct a presentation on the institution, Timor Leste and fundraising. 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 students and the presence of the school teacher and agents of the school, there will be little opportunity for 1 on 1 interaction. 2. Interaction with children 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>	- ETF Code of Conduct - Working with Children's Check mandatory
<b>Action to reduce risk</b>	Educational lesson at our regular briefing session Educational lessons specifically towards members entering the schools Teacher or Agents of the respective schools will be present during the classroom presentations
<b>By Whom</b>	Programs team leader and Board members
<b>By When</b>	At least 2 weeks prior to meeting with the respective school

**Table C: Risks in Australia – Fundraising Events**

<b>Activity</b>	General Fundraising Events
<b>Practical Details</b>	During the course of the year Educating the Future runs a number of events such as the 'Sydney Gala Night' and other events to raise awareness, education and funds for Timor Leste.

<b>Risks to children (likelihood, impact, severity)</b>	<p>Low</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Events run by Educating the Future are generally held in licenced venues, thus individuals under the age of 18 are prevented from attending</li> <li>2. Individuals under 18 years of age must have a responsible adult if they are to attend a licenced venue, thus children or young people will have a responsible adult with them at all material times.</li> </ol>
<b>Policies currently in place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educating the Future Code of Conduct</li> <li>- Working with Children's Check</li> </ul>
<b>Action to reduce risk</b>	Educational lesson at our regular briefing session
<b>By Whom</b>	Programs team leader and Board members
<b>By When</b>	At least 2 weeks prior to event