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Child Protection Policy

The TFI Child Protection Policy aims to ensure that all children and young people who work with TFI projects are treated with dignity and respect and that their welfare is a priority to all staff. TFI recognises the overriding principle of the Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 is that of the welfare of the child.

One person in each project involving direct contact with children will be responsible for co-ordinating the child protection policy and monitoring its implementation in practice. That person will be responsible for taking any necessary action when abuse is seen or alleged. Each project will run with the safety of all its members in mind and sensible steps will be taken in dealings with children.

For the purpose of the TFI Child Protection Policy the respective definitions of 'child' and 'abuse' are as follows.

Child

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.

Definitions of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a children.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Recording Procedures

If an allegation is made, or concerns are raised they will always be brought to the attention of the nominated person for child protection, or if more appropriate, the Local Authority or the Fund Administrator. The name and contact details of the nominated person will be supplied to the Administrator before funding commences.

When an allegation is made the project worker, volunteer or staff within the project will record the following:

- Name of the child;
- Parent's/carer's details;
- The child's address;
- Relevant phone numbers;
- An outline of the incident (what is said to have happened or what was seen);
- When it occurred;
- Who else, if anyone was there?
- What was said by those involved;
- What, if any, evidence of abuse can be recorded, e.g. bruises, bleeding, changed behaviour;
- Who has been told about it;
- Who was involved in the incident, and if possible record in what way concerned?
- If the child was able to say what happened, and if so, how they described it?
- Whether the parent's have been advised.

Complaints Procedures

All workers/volunteers, within projects run under the administration of TFI, will be made aware of the TFI Child Protection Policy and will be informed who they should report to if they have any concerns, that is to say, their Child Protection Project Co-ordinator and the Child Protection Nominated Officer. All workers/volunteers will be supplied with a copy of the TFI Child Protection Policy prior to working on any project which involves working directly or indirectly with children.

Any complaint of suspected or actual child abuse or of any child/children being put at risk will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. If somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then he/she will pass on these concerns to the Child Protection Project Co-ordinator and/or the nominated officer who will, in turn, make the appropriate Local Authority and/or Local Fund Administrator aware should it be necessary.