

E3 INITIATIVE CHILD & ADULT PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

This Policy covers Child Protection and Safeguarding of adults and was developed using the Child Protection Policies of three of our partner projects: Isibani Sethemba (South Africa, IS), Lulisandla Kumntwana (South Africa, LK) and Word Alive Ministries (Malawi, WA). As such it works across the countries in which E3 operates. It takes into account the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child, the South African Children's Act (No// 38 of 2005), Children's Amendment Bill (B19F-2006), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996. WA's policy is in line with The Child Care, Protection and Justice Act of Malawi (2010).

We believe that every adult and child should be valued as a gift from God and therefore needs to have dignity and value and be protected from any form of abuse so as to enhance the social functioning of that person.

2. Implementation of the policy

All E3 staff members/volunteers/staff at partner projects are obliged to sign this E3 Child and Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy and are obliged to adhere to all its contents. Even if E3 staff are not directly involved in handling any suspected cases of abuse, the E3 CEO must be informed by partner project leaders about the suspicions and outcomes as soon as they happen. Partner projects will also update on safeguarding practice, training and updates in their twice yearly written reports to E3 and meetings with the E3 CEO.

Partner projects will run workshops every January to refresh their staff and volunteers on the updated policy. E3 staff, trustees, volunteers and project leaders will read it and sign an acceptance form each time it is reviewed.

3. Definitions

3.1 A Child

A child in E3's context is defined as any person under the age of 18 years (or 21 if still in education).

3.2 An Adult

This policy also applies to a "vulnerable person" meaning an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma, disability or any other reason.

3.3 Abuse

Abuse is a general term used about situations where the child or adult may experience harm. It means any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a person and includes assaulting a person or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury on them; sexually abusing a person or allowing a person to be sexually abused; bullying by another person; or exposing or subjecting a person to behaviour that may psychologically or emotionally harm them. Sometimes, abuse may be unintentional. For example, a care giver who has a learning disability or an addiction issue, and some of the care given/withheld, direct or

indirect harm caused can be the unintended result of either doing their best with limited knowledge, skills or insight or through neglect due to being consumed by the addiction. We differentiate between different types of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, spiritual harm, sexual abuse and physical neglect.

4. What constitutes abuse?

4.1 Physical abuse

This includes hurting or injuring a child/adult, by inflicting pain or intentional drugging (drugs or alcohol) where there is knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. It is the use of violence or physical strength, which can lead to developmental problems. It is serious and repeated injuries which do not result from accidents, and which are inflicted by or result from the negligence of the person who cares for the child. It also includes drowning or smothering (suffocating), which can lead to murder/death.

4.2 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation of a child/adult for the sexual gratification of another person. Any person may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by intention or neglect, exploits them, directly or indirectly, in any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child/adult is said to have initiated or consented to the behaviour.

4.3 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when the behaviour of words of a person has a negative effect on the emotional development (intelligence, memory, perception, attention, language and moral development) of the child or emotional wellbeing of the adult. It is the continuous, repeated and inappropriate reaction to emotional needs. There are two kinds of emotional abuse: emotional mistreatment and emotional negligence. The first is verbal emotional attacks on a person, which can be threatening and sometimes involves isolation. The second applies more to children and occurs when the child does not receive appropriate attention or when the caregiver allows inappropriate behaviour (e.g. the use of drugs) in the child.

This includes using bizarre forms of punishment such as confinement in a closet or dark room, being tied to a chair, threatening or terrorizing a person. It also includes belittling, using abusive terms to describe a child and habitual scapegoating or blaming. Emotional abuse can happen on its own but is often associated with other forms of abuse and harm.

4.4 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse includes communication by words (i.e. derogatory name calling by adults or children, negative criticism, yelling as a form of discipline), vocal tones, racial taunts and accompanying body language and attitudes, which demean a person's worth.

4.5 Spiritual harm

Spiritual harm can result when a person misuses his/her spiritual authority negatively to control, manipulate or dominate a child/adult seemingly for Godly purposes, but in fact for their own benefit.

4.6 Environmental risks

An environmental risk can occur when:

- the physical environment in which the child/adult finds itself can be hazardous to their physical safety, whether through negligence or intent; or
- control measures for access to children's venues or safe places for adults are compromised, allowing access by unauthorised individuals.

4.7 Physical neglect

This occurs when a child's/adult's essential physical needs are not met, and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, hygiene, shelter and warmth.

In most cases, abuse will be the result of deliberate or avoidable behaviour. In some cases, a parent, carer or family member may not be in control of their behaviour through disabling causes (such as substance abuse or mental health problems), but abuse may still occur. However, the cause of the abuse may be of little consequence so safeguarding procedures must still be followed to ensure there is an appropriate and considered response.

Adults working with children should note that children can abuse other children and they should watch out for and eradicate bullying, name calling, incest, grooming, gang culture etc.

5. Why is this policy necessary?

E3's vision is to bring transformation into the lives of children and vulnerable people in some of the poorest communities in Southern Africa. It is vital E3 has a Child and Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy in place to safeguard children and adults from any kind of abuse as far as possible and to minimise the risk of abuse where it exists.

Every human being, including every child, is worthy of our respect, because we are all made in the image of God and because God loves human beings and wants to have a loving relationship with every one of them. *Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Gen 1:26).*

E3 believes that all forms of abuse and exploitation suffered by children and adults are unacceptable. It accepts that steps must be taken to protect them from persons with evil intent who may seek to gain access to them and win their trust through E3-funded activities. This policy applies to children and adults who are beneficiaries of E3 partner projects.

Child protection and safeguarding is a corporate and an individual responsibility. All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the importance of safeguarding all people involved in or benefitting from E3's work and partnerships to promote a safe and secure environment. Anyone found to be engaging in abusive and exploitative relationships with children or adults will no longer work, volunteer or have any association with E3 Initiative. During any investigation, the person will be suspended and barred from any

engagement with the project until the process has been concluded.

E3 recognises that the policy may not offer complete protection to children/adults or the organisation, but it deals with essential priorities for action. It is deliberately directive and specific and sets out key actions that anyone involved with children and other beneficiaries on behalf of E3 is required to fulfil.

No one should assume responsibility beyond the level of their experience and training in the management of safeguarding concerns.

6. Aims of the Policy

For children:

- To provide a welcoming, stimulating and empowering environment that is free from harm, enables children to recognise their rights and allows children to develop to their full potential through all the activities run by E3 and its partners, where children are the beneficiaries.
- To ensure that E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives know how to behave with children and what to do if there are concerns about the safety of a child.
- To allow staff to support any children that have had harmful or hurtful experiences.

For adults:

- To safeguard adults who work in, volunteer for or benefit from E3-funded projects and activities.

7. The Children's Amendment Bill (B19F-2006, South Africa)

The Children's Act (No// 38 Of 2005) requires that any child abuse or reasonable suspicion of child abuse be reported. The E3 staff or volunteer may then involve other agencies, such as social services, the Police and other child protection organisations.

E3 will conduct internal investigations and co-operate with the proper authorities. This will include the Child Protection Units of the country's Police Service.

The Child Protection Policy applies throughout E3, including events such as Life Skills, camps, outreaches, visits to projects and training courses.

8. Appropriate discipline

E3 agrees that every child/young adult needs discipline and boundaries set in a secure (as far as possible) and loving environment. This is essential for his/her development into a person that feels secure and loved, is self-confident, self-disciplined and able to deal with the stress of life. It is not punishment. Although discipline does involve correction (which is a form of punishment), it also involves instruction and affirmation. The goal of discipline is to help the child learn right from wrong, to respect the rights of others and to understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Discipline should therefore involve not only the correction of wrong or negative behaviour, but also should reward and praise acceptable or positive behaviour.

9. Responsibilities of staff regarding this Policy

9.1 Adults in the physical presence of children

When adults are in the physical presence of a child/children or vulnerable adults within the context of E3, it is their responsibility to ensure the following:

- Avoid being alone with a child wherever possible, but if essential and unavoidable it should always be in an open space;
- Always behave appropriately (see E3 Code of Conduct);
- Observe the rules established for the safety and security of children;
- Recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed;
- Ensure relationships with the children/adults in their care are appropriate in every respect.

9.2 Adults in indirect contact with children

The policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers (people who help with E3 activities without remuneration), donors and anyone else who has access to information concerning children within the context of E3 projects such as children's names, contact details, photographs, personal information and HIV status.

9.3 E3 Partner Projects

This policy also applies to E3 partner projects, who must have a Child and Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is written, committed to by all staff and volunteers and is actively adhered to and reported on in written reports and update meetings with E3. All cases of abuse (whether alleged or proven) must be reported to the E3 CEO at the start of the investigation with regular updates as it progresses until the end.

9.4 Guidelines for working with donors, volunteers or reporters who visit E3 partner projects.

1. Each adult visitor, partner or reporter arranging to meet any beneficiary of E3's partner projects will only be able to do so if it has been arranged in advance with the E3 CEO. If the person is known by E3 staff or Trustees, a written reference is required from the staff member or Trustee inviting him/her. If not previously known by E3 staff or Trustees, a background check will be conducted before the visit.
2. The E3 CEO or another staff member will always accompany the visitor for the duration of the visit to partner projects to interpret and aid understanding of E3's work and context.
3. It is prohibited to have any communication post-visit with a particular person or family. Any updates after the visit will be written by and sent from E3 staff.
4. All visitors, partners and reporters will be fully briefed on E3's Child and Adult Protection & Safeguarding policy and must agree to follow the policy.
5. Information about the country and its cultural traditions will be provided to the supporter, to ensure that cultural practices are sensitively observed.
6. Visitors must respect and adhere to the boundaries of the relationship with the beneficiary and not interfere with parenting matters that do not impact the health, safety or welfare of the child.

7. Visitors must show respect to E3 staff, children, students, families and communities that they meet and take into consideration the cultural sensitivities of the area they visit.
8. Visitors must not give contact details to anyone they meet through the project visit. The relationship is always through E3.
9. Visitors should not use on social media, websites or in print, images and stories they have gathered during an E3 partner visit, without prior consent of the E3 CEO or E3 Marketing and Fundraising Manager.

10. Recruitment and training of volunteers and employees

- 10.1 All volunteers (local and international) and employees will be given a copy of this Policy and will be asked to sign a declaration that they have received and understood it and will abide by it.
- 10.2 They will be asked to sign a declaration of criminal convictions as part of the application process.
- 10.3 For applicants in the UK, a DBS Check will be carried out before they are appointed and will be updated every 3 years (as recommended by the Criminal Records Bureau). There is currently no equivalent to the DBS in South Africa and the other countries in which E3 operates, but a Police Clearance will be carried out in those countries before they start work or volunteering. Applicants must give permission to E3 to do a police check at any time during their service to the organisation.
- 10.4 For all applicants, three reliable character references will be obtained, and particular attention will be given to any area of concern relating to child abuse. During the interview process applicants will be asked about previous work with children.
- 10.5 The Child and Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy will be made available to the public via the E3 website and on the Charity Commission website.
- 10.6 All volunteers will be assigned to a paid staff member (of E3 or one of our partner projects), who will monitor the volunteer to ensure that these policy measures are implemented and adhered to. Where there are concerns, the staff member will be asked to report to the E3 CEO or Chair of Trustees.
- 10.7 All employees, parents, children and volunteers will have access to child friendly reporting procedures, including contact details for reporting possible abuse. This is to include posters around the centre/clinic/school/office detailing who to contact if someone has a concern.

11. Communication and photos about child beneficiaries

- 11.1 Communication about children should use pictures that are decent and respectful, not presenting them as victims. Children should be adequately clothed and poses that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive should be avoided. Language that implies a relationship of power should also be avoided. However, we also recognise there are times when children are in reality victims, for example, of famine. In such cases, the child's dignity should still be

preserved whilst presenting the reality.

- 11.2 As has always been the case, E3's tone of voice for photos and stories, is to avoid stereotypes (e.g. Western aid worker tends helpless victim, etc.) and shows people helping and working for themselves, not as victims.
- 11.3 E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives will never take pictures of children and their parents/caregivers/guardians who say they do not want to be photographed.
- 11.4 Websites and other promotional materials should not use electronic images of children without permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child or of adults without consent. When photos and stories are gathered by E3 staff, volunteers or other representatives, we will ask for consent to use them for social media, the website and donor updates. The E3 project leader will obtain consent before our visit and complete a form with the person's name, community and signature to give consent. All visitors will be accompanied by an E3 staff member.
- 11.5 On social media, the website and e-newsletter, E3 will not use children's real names or details of their specific location when using a photo and story. On Back to School donor updates, we will use children's real names and photos, but not specific information about where they live.
- 11.6 Photos and video will be stored securely using third party cloud storage. We do not store any photos, videos or stories for which we don't have consent.
- 11.7 Personal Information about child beneficiaries will be stored on E3's secure database, Salesforce, and only accessed by E3 staff. Lists of children will not be stored on personal computers. The Back to School form for children on E3's programme contains a privacy statement which explains how we keep data and photos, and how we use them.

12. Code of Conduct

The following guidelines are intended to assist E3 staff in monitoring and supervising behaviour and interactions with children and to prevent those that may harm children from doing so, or to identify unreported cases of abuse. It seeks to protect E3 representatives from the likelihood of allegations being made against them either through simple misinterpretation of actions or malicious untruth. E3 believes it is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help to create a positive culture and environment by promoting good practice.

E3 Staff, volunteers, partner project staff and others who are in contact with children and other beneficiaries:

1. Are not allowed to use any form of physical punishment to discipline a child. Physical force can only be used to stop behaviour that can be very harmful to others. Our desire is for this to be true for parents and guardians in local communities too, but this is a contentious issue in Malawi, Lesotho and Zambia. Through our gender-based violence awareness and education work, we hope to challenge the current situation and bring change and healing.
2. Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).

3. One to one cross-gender contact should be avoided wherever possible, but if essential and unavoidable, it should always be in an open space and someone else should know about the meeting;
4. Be inclusive and involve all children without discrimination or exclusion on the basis of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or any other status.
5. Treat all young people with respect and dignity and encourage children's voices and views.
6. Be aware of peer abuse as well as high-risk peer situations and develop measures to protect younger children from peer and adult abuse.
7. Provide an enabling environment for children's personal, physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.
8. Create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues and concerns.
9. Always put the welfare and best interest of each child first before achieving any goals.
10. Foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged.
11. Ensure anyone who has contact with children or with information relating to children, is sensitised about child abuse. E3 CEO will discuss this document with new E3 members of staff, trustees or volunteers. Partner project leaders will run an annual training workshop with staff and volunteers on this policy.
12. Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision making process.
13. Involve parents and caregivers as much as possible.
14. Be an excellent role model for children by being respectful, mature and patient.
15. Report suspected or alleged abuse to the designated Safeguarding contact (Project Leader in the partner project, E3 CEO or E3 Chair of Trustees).
16. Avoid placing oneself in a compromising or vulnerable position when meeting with children (e.g. taking a child on a car journey or home on your own. Where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the E3 CEO and/or the child's parent or caregiver.) Care needs to be taken in this respect with adult beneficiaries too.

E3 staff, volunteers and other representatives must never:

1. Hit or otherwise physically assault a child.
2. Share a bedroom with a child or young person.
3. Use or allow harsh or degrading language that will mentally or emotionally abuse any child.
4. Date, be in a love relationship or become romantically involved with a child.
5. Develop a sexual relationship with a child.
6. Kiss, hug, fondle, rub, or touch a child in an inappropriate, culturally insensitive or sexually provocative manner.
7. Do things of a personal nature that the children could do for themselves, including dressing, bathing and grooming.
8. Initiate physical contact (e.g. holding hands unless initiated by the child).
9. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
10. Allow children to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.
11. Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
12. Act in a way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate or degrade a child.
13. Use, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while participating in or assisting with programmes or activities for children.

14. Discuss sexual activities, dreams and fantasies, pornographic material, videos and magazines except in an E3-approved educational programme with children.
15. Possess any sexually oriented material such as magazines, cards, videos etc at work except when it is permitted as part of an E3-authorized educational programme.

13. Procedures for reporting suspected or actual abuse

13.1 Take immediate action

The Project Leader is the designated Safeguarding Officer in each partner project, and he/she is the point of contact who liaises with the E3 CEO. If there is a concern about the Project Leader, a staff member or volunteer can contact E3 directly.

Should a person in the E3 office or an E3 partner project observe or receive any information about actual or suspected abuse within the context of E3 activities, he or she must immediately inform the appropriate E3 staff member. Where appropriate the matter will be referred for further investigation.

Any person who has knowledge or suspicion that a child or adult is at risk must report this to the appropriate E3 staff member. Together they will determine what action to take.

In order that a high standard of reporting and responding is met, staff undertake to:

- take seriously any concerns raised;
- take positive steps to ensure the protection of children/adults who are the subject of any concerns;
- support children, parents, staff or other volunteers who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns;
- act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation;
- be guided through the child protection process by the principle of “the best interests of the child”;
- listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of the child/adult at risk; work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals (social workers, the Police etc) to ensure the protection of all. If an E3 partner has a safeguarding concern within its activities, this should be reported to the E3 CEO even if it does not involve E3 staff or volunteers.

13.2 Reporting child abuse by someone outside E3 or its partners

If an E3 worker suspects that a child is being abused by family members (e.g. grandpa/aunt/uncle) or other people, he/she must follow the procedure described below:

- Note the date and time you identified the abuse.
- Write a report, using the child’s own words as far as possible. Do not ask leading questions. Listen carefully and make notes of what the child says.
- Note the reason for suspecting abuse.
- Report his/her concerns to the appropriate E3 staff member (CEO or Chair of Trustees).

13.3 Reporting child abuse by someone inside E3 or one of its partners

If a worker/volunteer suspects that a child is being abused by a staff member, Trustee or volunteer from E3 or one of its partners, the following procedure is applicable:

- Note the date and time the suspected abuse was identified.
- Write a report, using the child's own words as far as possible. Do not ask leading questions. Listen carefully and make notes of what the child says.
- Note the reason for suspecting abuse.
- Report the matter to the appropriate E3 staff member (CEO or Chair of Trustees).

13.4 Helpful statements to make to the person reporting the abuse

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child/adult says).
- Thank you for telling me.
- It is not your fault.
- I will help you.

Do not say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure that this is true?
- Why? Who? When? Where?
- Never make false promises

13.5 Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality is of the utmost importance when dealing with issues and concerns regarding possible abuse. E3 staff members/volunteers must exercise extreme vigilance in protecting information and must pass on this information via the reporting process as described above. Any matters regarding the abuse or the matter in general must only be discussed within the above mentioned reporting structure, which includes outside agencies who are involved. The status of the person suspected of being abused should not be disclosed to any persons outside of the reporting structure without the informed written consent of the child/adult.

If a child/adult confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff or volunteer says sensitively that he/she has a responsibility to refer for the person's own sake.

13.6 Confidential record keeping

Any concerns, allegations or disclosure must be written down at the time or as soon as possible after the concern has been raised. Records must be signed and dated.

Records must be locked away in a safe place which is not accessible to those outside the reporting process. Information may only be shared with relevant parties, and it must always be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

Disciplinary steps will be taken to deal with the situation according to E3 Disciplinary Procedures. Any E3 staff member or volunteer found to have abused a child or adult while they were a staff member or volunteer at E3 will be subjected to immediate dismissal following this investigation and E3 may decide to begin legal action against the former staff member or volunteer.

14. Declaration of acceptance

This policy should be signed and dated before commencement of this relationship. E3 will keep the Declaration of Acceptance on file. Please keep a copy of this policy to hand so it can be referred to at any time.

Published April 2019, revised October 2021, reviewed January 2023 and January 2024

E3 INITIATIVE CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

I hereby declare that I have read and understand the E3 Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and I agree to abide by its contents.

Print name.....

Signature

Position in relation to E3
(Including partner project name if you are a project leader)

Date