

Sight For All

Child Protection Policy Fact Sheet



Children have the right to be protected and safe from abuse and exploitation. The need to protect children is vital for all communities. Children across the world are subjected to exploitation and abuse and experience sexual, physical and psychological violation. Many are forced into exploitative work, including commercial sexual exploitation.

Sight For All considers child abuse and child exploitation unacceptable in all cases. Children have the right to be protected and safe from abuse and exploitation, and Sight For All has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and exploitation.

Sight For All's Child Protection Policy exists to ensure the safety of those it works with, including children. This fact sheet provides an overview of Sight For All's Child Protection Policy, but it does not replace the Policy.

The Sight For All Child Protection Policy applies to all Sight For All Personnel including: Board Directors, employees, medical volunteers (Visionaries), non-medical volunteers, Ophthalmic Country Officers, Fellows, project participants, Eye Unit Directors, contractors, in-country representatives involved with Sight For All projects and partners that have a formal contractual relationship with Sight For All.

The Policy is underpinned by five principles:

- Principle 1: Zero tolerance of child exploitation and abuse
- Principle 2: Best interests of the child
- Principle 3: Awareness and management of Risks
- Principle 4: Child safety responsibilities
- Principle 5: Reporting and procedural fairness

Key Definitions

CHILDREN:

In accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 'child' means every human being under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

ABUSE:

Physical abuse—the use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviour includes shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning.

Neglect—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.

Emotional abuse—refers to a parent or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts toward a child or a pattern of failure over time, to provide a child with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability. Such acts have a high probability of damaging a child's self-esteem or social competence.

Sexual abuse—the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or significantly older child or adolescent. Sexually abusive behaviours 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.

CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: One or more of the following:

- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child.
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material.
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming.

CHILD PROTECTION:

An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly arising from child exploitation and abuse.

Policy Implementation

The following are key requirements in the implementation of the Sight For All Child Protection Policy. Sight For All endeavours to keep children safe through the practices outlined below.

Recruitment Practices

Sight For All aims to recruit the safest and most suitable people to undertake positions, and will never knowingly engage, either directly or indirectly, an individual who poses an unacceptable risk to children.

Training

All Sight For All Board Directors, staff, Visionaries, volunteers, Ophthalmic Country Officer, Fellows, project participants, project partners, consultants and contractors receive a copy and sign their understanding of the Child Protection Policy and Vulnerable Person's Code of Conduct.

Good Development Practice Workshops are conducted and includes a comprehensive section on child protection.

Partners

Non-Government Partners to Sight For All are required to maintain their own child protection policies. Government partners and Sight For All will work together to ensure that child safeguarding standards are included in partner agreements. Actions that cause Sight For All staff to believe that children are being exposed to significant risk will result in the termination of the agreement with that partner organisation.

Risk Management

Project risk assessments are undertaken as part of initiation and concept phases and reassessed throughout the project period. Project risk assessments cover child safeguarding risks and include actions and recommendations to mitigate or remove potential risks.

Monitoring of child protection risks at an organisational level is undertaken by the Sight For All Board of Directors.

Taking Images of Children

When taking photographs, Sight For All representatives must be familiar with, and understand the importance of respecting the individual's dignity, and ensuring the rights, safety and wellbeing of those being portrayed. Images should be an honest representation of the context and facts and not misrepresent the individual, context, location or situation. Informed consent must be provided for all images that are taken, with evidence of consent required by the Sight For All Head Office.

Reporting

All concerns, suspicions or allegations of child abuse and exploitation, a breach of this policy or Sight For All's Code of Conduct Policy must be reported immediately. Sight For All takes all reports and concerns seriously and acts on them immediately. In investigating concerns or allegations of child abuse or exploitation, Sight For All ensures confidentiality and that the principles of natural justice will prevail. Anyone can make a report of suspected or actual child abuse or exploitation.

Any observation of concerning behaviour that may breach Sight For All's Child Protection Policy or Vulnerable Person's Code of Conduct should be reported. So must suspicion or allegation of possession or access of child pornography or child exploitation material, any observation of inappropriate taking of children's photographs, any risk or harm to children as a result of being involved in Sight For All activities.

Reports are to be made within a 24-hour period.

What if I am not sure what I have seen is child exploitation and abuse?

Contact the Child Protection focal person or Sight For All Country Officer for confidential advice and further information about what constitutes child exploitation and abuse or policy non-compliance.

How do I make a report?

Reports can be made by: <https://sightforall.org/complaints/> or by contacting one of the Sight For All representatives listed below:

Sight For All Executive Officer – jhatswell@sightforall.org

Mongolia/Sri Lanka/Myanmar Country Officer – myanmarcountryofficer@sightforall.org

Cambodia Country Officer – cambodiacountryofficer@sightforall.org

Sri Lanka Country Officer – srilankacountryofficer@sightforall.org