

Child Protection Policy

January 2018



Asian Outreach Cambodia (AOC) members and associates include long-term and short-term foreign and Cambodian staff, volunteers, consultants, board and other guests of AOC.

1. Introduction

"If anyone causes one of these little ones to lose his faith in Me, it would be better for that person to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be drowned in the deep sea" Matthew 18:6

Child Protection is of primary importance to AOC. The purpose and principle of Child Protection is to protect children from all kinds of abuse, while also ensuring staff and visitors are not at risk of false accusations of inappropriate behavior.

2. Statement of Commitment

AOC strongly believes that the Child Protection Policy does relate to God's concern. Jesus said that He welcomes children and pays close attention to children, and will rebuke and punish anyone who harms them.

- 2.1 AOC is committed to the welfare and rights of children (under the age of 18) throughout Cambodia. We oppose all forms of exploitation and child abuse.
- 2.2 AOC believes that all children have a right to protection from abuse regardless of race, social background, age, gender, skin color, disability, religion or belief.
- 2.3 AOC believes that it is wrong to remain silent when it is known that a child is being abused or exploited.
- 2.4 AOC is committed to keeping the laws on child rights and welfare. This includes the UN Convention on the Rights of Child (adopted by Royal Cambodian Government 1992) and the Convention on the Minimum Age of Working Children (adopted in 1999).
- 2.5 AOC believes in the importance of child protection, so that not only are the children protected from abuse by AOC members and associates, but also that preventative measures can be made to protect AOC members and associates, and AOC's integrity.
- 2.6 AOC will appoint a Designated Person for Child Protection (DP) who along with the AOC Director and AOC Board will ensure that this Policy is strictly adhered to at all times.

3. The Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined as any act by parent, guardian, caregiver or any other person that endangers or impairs the child's physical and/or emotional well-being (a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years). Child abuse includes the following forms:

3.1 Physical abuse:

Any punishment and physical abuse to children e.g. beating, including with a stick or other implement, poisoning, shaking, and smothering or forcing the child to work in an unsafe way/environment. These are things that deliberately and negatively affect the physical well-being of children.

3.2 Mental Abuse:

Any gestures, words and behaviors that deliberately affect a child's mental/emotional wellbeing, for example: by making them anxious, afraid, annoyed or discouraged.

3.3 Spiritual Abuse:

Spiritual abuse occurs when a spiritual leader, or someone else in a position of spiritual authority, or a spiritual system, misuses their authority, with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating or dominating another person.

3.4 Neglect:

Any actions that deliberately neglect to provide the four essential rights of children. (right to live, right to learn, right to participate. and the right to speak).

3.5 Sexual abuse:

Any actions with sexual intent towards children, forcing the children to watch or take part in pornography, to participate in/or observe any form of sexual act or coercing the child to have sex.

4. Behavior Protocols

Child Protection is of primary importance to AOC. Therefore, all visitors are expected to assist AOC in protecting children by abiding to the Behavior Protocols at all times. It is important for all adults in contact with children to adhere to the following:

- 4.1 I will not travel to AOC projects unless I am accompanied by an authorized AOC staff member.
- 4.2 I will always be appropriately and culturally sensitive in all interactions with children.
- 4.3 I will always respect each child's boundaries and when unsure of the boundaries of appropriate or inappropriate behavior, I will seek guidance, without hesitation, from accompanying AOC staff.
- 4.4 I must be visible to others when working or meeting with children; whenever possible I will not stay alone with any children or minors, whether in the child's house or elsewhere.
- 4.5 I will be entirely professional in my relationship with children, while at the same time demonstrating compassion and care in all actions and speech.
- 4.6 I will not engage in physical conduct with children such as culturally inappropriate or unwanted touching, hugging, kissing, or blocking of their normal movement.
- 4.7 I will not revisit a project or a child without an authorized AOC staff member present.
- 4.8 I will not share personal contact details (home, work or hotel address) with any child or their family.
- 4.9 I will only provide gifts that are approved by AOC staff. I will not provide cash gifts directly to children or their families. However, I do understand that cash gifts can be channeled through the AOC office.
- 4.10 I will only photograph or post photographs of children when they are appropriately dressed, and I will respect their dignity and right to privacy at all time.
- 4.11 I will be concerned about the perception and actual nature of my interaction and relationship with all children in Cambodia.
- 4.12 I will not use verbal or visual conduct such as derogatory comments, pornography, sexual advances, unwanted invitations, or use of power and authority to persuade a child.

All AOC staff and those working alongside AOC (individuals and visiting team members) must never:

- 4.13 Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- 4.14 Develop relationships with children which could be deemed as exploitative or abusive
- 4.15 Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.
- 4.16 Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children
- 4.17 Use language which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive

In general:

- 4.18 All members and associates of AOC are expected to treat all children associated with the work of AOC with respect and dignity.
- 4.19 Each individual staff member and visiting individuals and team members working alongside AOC must sign a statement to say they have read the policy, will respect it and understand that action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behavior.
- 4.20 When disciplining a child, it will be done in a non-violent and non-humiliating manner, primarily verbal and withdrawing privileges.
- 4.21 Adults should always be responsible for their behavior and cannot blame the child if the child 'provokes' or acts in a 'seductive' way.
- 4.22 Where children are placed in communities, careful screening and training of foster parents will be ensured.
- 4.23 If protocols are broken the person involved will be disciplined and may lose their job, or in the case of international visitors the process will be followed and the relevant embassy and/or sending agency will be notified.

5. <u>Recruiting and Screening</u>

- 5.1 AOC Board Members, staff (expatriate and Khmer), full time, part time and volunteers will be screened during the recruitment process prior to their taking up their positions. They will be required to sign the Child Protection Policy of AOC stating that they have had no previous convictions for abuse against children, violent behavior and improper behavior. See APPENDIX ONE for **Declaration of Commitment and Statement Of No Criminal Conviction.** A copy will be kept on file at the AOC office, in a confidential and secure place.
- 5.2 Consultants and visiting international and national teams will be required to sign AOC's Child Protection Policy stating that they have had no previous convictions for abuse against children, including violent behavior and improper behavior. It will be the sending agency's responsibility to screen team members, and ensure they are familiar with AOC's Child Protection Policy. See APPENDIX ONE for **Declaration of Commitment and Statement Of No Criminal Conviction.** A copy will be kept on file at the AOC office, in a confidential and secure place.

5.3 A Screening and Background Information Checklist (APPENDIX TWO) is to ensure that the recruiting and screening procedures have been fully complied with by the AOC Director and/or the Designated Person for Child Protection.

6. Communication

All of AOC's communication material and visual aids will only use pictures of children in a decent and respectful way. Photographs or languages that are sexually suggestive should not be used.

- 6.1 AOC is committed to inform its members and associates about the importance of Child Protection so that children are protected from abuse and each member's integrity is ensured.
- 6.2 AOC members and associates are committed to discussing this with the communities in which they work.
- 6.3 Special care will be taken to protect identities of children pictured in communications material, in order to prevent possible harms, abuses or other endangerments.
- 6.4 The named Designated Person for Child Protection will ensure that all communication protocols are adhered to, and will at all times ensure the safety of the children.
- 6.5 Only the AOC Director or Designated Person can be the official spokesperson when dealing with the media. Any other designated spokesperson must be officially appointed by AOC Director. In relating to the media, the message that child abuse is wrong under all circumstances and that keeping silent is wrong must be clearly communicated.
- 6.6 It may sometimes be necessary to communicate information about a child to assist the process of police investigation and prosecution. Information will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis and only after thorough consultation with AOC Director.

7 Allegation/Incident Management Plan

Children have the right to be totally secure from the fear or reality of abuse resulting from inappropriate contact with any person. An effective management plan where

- All staff are trained to report suspicious behaviour or concerns
- All concerns and allegations of child abuse of any form are investigated thoroughly
- Appropriate action is taken
- This will help prevent abuse occurring, as child abusers are less likely to remain in an environment where staff and workers report suspicious behaviour.

Staff and workers have the right to be secure from the fear of false accusations of child abuse, and this will also be addressed, if there is an allegation made against a person.

Child abuse can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with the objective judgement of the appropriate action to be taken. Therefore, AOC staff and workers must be familiar with this policy, so that if they are faced with a concern or allegation, they will immediately put into action the Management Plan, which will safeguard all concerned.

THE FOLLOWING STEPS ARE TO BE ADHERED TO WHERE CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS ARISE REGARDING THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN:

- 7.1 When a person has concerns that a child is being abused in any from, this must IMMEDIATELY (within 12 hours) be brought to the attention of the Director of AOC and/or The Designated Person for Child Protection. In the case of the alleged abuser, being one of these two people, the matter is to be addressed with the AOC Board Chairperson, who will immediately appoint the Management Person in charge of the Procedure. The initial accusation may be made verbally, but within 12 hours, the CONFIDENTIAL CONCERN/ALLEGATION FORM must be completed and handed to the person in charge. This is essential, to ensure that any facts and suspicions are clearly identified and followed through, during the investigation. This form must be kept in a secure, safe location, so that it is not seen by anyone else. APPENDIX THREE
- 7.2 When unsure if there is enough information to go on it may be best to raise concerns with the village chief and contact ADHOC Organisation 023 218 653 for advice.
- 7.3 The welfare of the child is paramount, and every effort is to be made to immediately remove the child from the situation and to provide care, protections and other forms of assistance, if it is deemed essential for the child's safety. At no time, should there be a 'panic reaction'. If the child is safe, it is better to appoint the investigative team, and then proceed with care and clarity.
- 7.4 The allegation must be kept confidential, with only those directly involved with appropriate information. Anyone from AOC found to be widening the circle of information (telling others about the abuse) will have disciplinary action taken against them.
- 7.5 The Director will immediately inform the AOC Board Chairperson, and together, in consultation with the Designated Person, will appoint two others (one who is a Board member, if possible) to assist with the investigation and corrective action to be taken. Only those people that have the 'right' or 'need to know' basis

will be informed of the allegation, as and when necessary. Confidentiality of names of both the accused and the child will be paramount, following the laws of the country and the Child Protection Policy.

- 7.6 The Management Team will use the **Confidential Checklist for Incident/Management Plan** and complete all steps, recording when each step is completed. They will also include any relevant information and outcomes. See APPENDIX FOUR
- 7.7 Both victim and alleged perpetrator (the person that may have abused the child) will be treated with respect from the start of the process to the end.
- 7.8 AOC will not dismiss a child's accusation of abuse without appropriate investigation. The child will be listened to and notes of the conversation taken down. The child won't be promised confidentiality as what he/she has shared might need to be told to others in AOC leadership.
- 7.9 A child is believed until proven otherwise.
- 7.10 While the alleged perpetrator may be innocent, it is essential that the safety of the child comes first. Therefore, the person will be informed of the allegation and may be asked to stand down from his/her role until the initial investigation is complete and the next steps are determined.
- 7.11 Records should be made of all the facts related to the investigation and these should be carefully and confidentially filed. Disclosure of information about past or present abuse of children and any persons involved should be limited to only the people who need to know.
- 7.12 The victim should receive professional counseling for as long as needed and feasible.
- 7.13 The law should not be side-stepped. In the case of serious offences there maybe the need to inform the legal authorities. Pastoral care may be given to the offender, but not outside the framework of the law.
- 7.14 The perpetrator, if proven guilty, should be dismissed from AOC without the possibility of reinstatement.
- 7.15 If a foreigner is involved the relevant embassy and/or sending agency will be notified.
- 7.16 The AOC Director or Designated Person will deal with the media and police.
- 7.17 If it is found that the allegations are unsubstantiated and proven false, the alleged perpetrator will be reinstated fully into his/her role.

8 Advocacy and Networking

- 8.1 AOC is committed to network with other groups who are involved in Child Protection.
- 8.2 AOC is committed to be involved when possible in community, district and regional activities that support and promote Child Protection.
- 8.3 AOC will encourage and support training activities on Child Protection.

Laws in the Kingdom of Cambodia

Cambodian National Assembly Constitution

Article 31

The Kingdom of Cambodia shall recognize and respect human rights as stipulated in the United Nations charter, the Universal declaration of Human Rights, thee same covenants and conventions related to human rights, women's and children's rights.

Every Khmer citizen shall be equal before the law, enjoying the same rights, freedom and fulfilling the same obligations regardless of race, color, sex, language, religious belief, political tendency, birth origin, wealth or social status. The exercise of personal rights and freedom by any individual shall not adversely affect the rights and origins of others. The exercise of such rights and freedom shall be in accordance with the law.

Article 32

Every Khmer citizen shall have the right to life, personal freedom and security; there shall be no capital punishment.

Article 38

The law guarantees there shall be no physical abuse against any individual.

The law shall protect life, honor, and dignity of the citizens.

The prosecution, arrest or detention of any person shall not be done except in accordance with the law. Coercion, physical ill treatment or any other mistreatment that imposes additional punishment on a detainee or prisoner shall be prohibited. Persons who commits, participate or conspire in such acts shall be punished according to the law.

Article 41: causing wounds on purpose:

Article 42: Rape

Article 48:

• The State shall protect the rights of children as stipulated in the Convention on Children in particular the right to life, education, protection during wartime, and from economic or sexual exploitation.

• The State shall protect children from acts that are injurious to their educational opportunities, health and welfare.

Articles from the Labour Code, 1997

Article 83: Abusive language, threat, violence or assault of the employer or worker against the employer or other workers is considered to be a serious offence. In which case according to Article 83 the employer can ask the employee to leave without notice.

Article 172: All forms of sexual violation (harassment) are strictly forbidden.

Article 177: The minimum allowable age for any kind of employment which could be hazardous to health, safety or morality of an adolescent is eighteen years.

Article 180: In orphanages and charitable institutions occupational or vocational training for children less than fourteen years old must not exceed three hours per day, a record must be kept indicating the date of birth, manual labour conditions for children and daily schedule i.e. the assignment of hours of study, manual labour, rest and meals.

Declaration of Commitment and Statement of no criminal conviction

To be signed by all AOC staff, volunteers and visiting national and international team members. A copy will be kept on file at the AOC Cambodia office. APPENDIX ONE



Child Protection Policy CONFIDENTIAL FORM

DECLARATION FOR AOC STAFF, BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF, CONSULTANTS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL VISITORS WORKING WITH AOC.

I declare that:

- 1) I have read and understood AOC's Child Protection Policy.
- 2) I will work within the procedure as laid out by AOC's Child Protection Policy.
- 3) I have not been accused or convicted of any offence involving physical or sexual abuse of children.
- 4) I understand that if a complaint is brought against me regarding the abuse of children while engaged in AOC's activities, the allegations will thoroughly be investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities.
- 5) I agree to abide to this policy and to make all efforts to protect children from abuse.
- 6) I agree that I have received, read and accept the Child Protection Code of Conduct Card and will adhere to this.

You are advised that under the provisions of the Cambodian Law, you should declare all convictions including "spent" convictions.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order (please tick)

YES • NO •

If YES, please state below the nature and date (s) of the offence (s)

DECLARATION

I understand that, if it is found that I have withheld information or included any false or misleading information above, I will be remove from the registered database of consultants, or if already on assignment, this will render me liable to the termination of the contract without notice. I understand that the information will be kept securely by Asian Outreach Cambodia.

I hereby declare the information I have provided is accurate.

Signed: Date:

ASIAN OUTREACH CAMBODIA CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT CARD

ASIAN OUTREACH Cambodia (AOC), through its Child Protection Policy (CPP), is committed to the protection of children.

We acknowledge that children's rights, safety and protection are paramount, and place the highest importance on ensuring that all children (up to 18 years) in our ministries are safeguarded from abuse or neglect in any form. As a signatory to the Code of Conduct in the AOC CPP:

I WILL:

- 1. Ensure all children in my care and in the ministry will be safe and secure.
- 2. Respect the cultures, customs and boundaries of all children, treating them with dignity and compassion.
- 3. Be accountable to the AOC Board regarding the CPP and procedures.

I WILL NEVER:

- 1. Touch children in a way that upsets, threatens or abuses them.
- 2. Develop physical, sexual or exploitative relationships with children.

- 3. Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children.
- 4. Use language, actions or resources that are inappropriate, offensive, violent or abusive.
- 5. Spend time alone secluded with a child, but wherever possible be visible to others.
- 6. Photograph or video children, or publish images taken, in an inappropriate or compromising manner.

APPENDIX TWO

SCREENING AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION CHECKLIST

This form is strictly confidential and is to be used for the purposes of appointment or review of staff that are directly dealing with children. Only those involved in this process will have access to this information. The exception to this is when disclosure is required by law or directed by an administrative or judicial order. This form is a checklist – accompanying documentation is to be kept with this form. Where further information is required, this is to be fully investigated and clarified prior to any appointment being made.

Applicant's Full Name

Position Applied For _____ Date: _____

Information	Completed and Satisfactory	Completed and further information required
1. Candidate completed Self Declaration Form		
2. CV read and verified employment history		
2.1 This section provides guidelines regarding employment history		

Length of employment in specific areas
 Reasons for resigning
Previous work with children
 Personal circumstances e.g. married, children and their ages
3. References confirmed and referees contacted
3.1 This section provides guidelines on discussion with referee:
Relationship with candidate
 Positions candidate held, employment
 Evaluation of candidate's performance
Candidate's strengths/skills
 Candidate's personality/character that may cause difficulties in working
with children or others
 Referee recommends candidate for the position applied for
 Other information given that will assist in the appointment decision
4. Police checks completed
5. Interview with Candidate
5.1 This section provides guidelines for the interview of the candidate
Previous employment
 Reasons for applying for position
 Previous convictions of criminal offences, or cautions by the Police
 Reasons why candidate should not work unsupervised with children
 Health issues that may affect working with children



APPENDIX THREE

CONFIDENTIAL CONCERN AND ALLEGATION FORM

Date:	Time:	Location:		
Name of person f	iling the report:			
Position or other:				
Concern brought	to the attention of:	(Name and Position)		 •••••
				 •••••
Name of child:			M/F	 •••••
Age and DOB				

Nature of Concern/suspected abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect)

Indications of suspect abuse (facts, course of events, physical signs) Initial Action taken: Signature of person reporting: Signature of AOC Director/Designated Person for Child Protection:

APPENDIX FOUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY CONFIDENTIAL CHECKLIST FOR INCIDENT/MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following (three pages) is the checklist for all involved in the case of concern, suspicion or accusation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour in any form. If a concern or allegation is made, this checklist is to ensure that all aspects are followed. No names are to be recorded on this checklist.

A. INITIAL ACTION AND RESPONSE (First twelve hours)	COMPLETED Time and Date
1.1 Concern brought to attention of AOC Director and/or Designated Person (DP). The	
DP is to interview the person who brings it to his/her attention, for a full background regarding the situation.	
1.2 DP ensures child is safe	
1.3 DP notifies AOC Board Chairperson (BC)	
1.4 DP and BC appoint two team members (one of whom is a Board Member) to make up	
the Management Team (MT). One is to be given the role of spokesperson for media,	
police and other authorities. The team is to ensure they are totally familiar with the	
procedures of the Management Plan section of the CPP	
1.5 MT informs the person accused, who immediately has the opportunity to give a full	
account of the situation. Accused is stood down while investigation is proceeding.	
1.6 Parents or caregivers of the child are notified of the allegation and support and	
assistance is offered.	
1.7 MT meets with the child, in a safe environment, and listens to his/her account of the	
situation. No prompting or suggestions are to be given to the child regarding the	
alleged abuse.	

1.8 MT draws up detailed investigation and management plan based on the information received to date. This involves making an initial decision on the validity and truth in the concern or allegation.	
This section is to be followed if the initial investigation shows there is evidence that the concern or allegation is true.	
B. INVESTIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN (First twenty-four hours, initially and then ongoing until completion)	
2.1 MT informs Board Chairperson of allegation and Management Plan. Ongoing communication of progress to be made to him/her.	
2.2 Full investigation begins	
2.2.1 All parties are to be interviewed in depth (if not done previously).	
2.2.2 Statements prepared for the authorities, police, child welfare and media. (Statements are not to be released until necessary)	
2.3 Authorities, including police and welfare, are notified, according to the laws of the	
country	
2.4 All information and discussions are to be documented in writing and kept in a safe and	
confidential place. Access to files on computers must be restricted.	

2.4.1 All information, verbal and written, is to be kept confidential, working on a "need to	
know" policy. All communication by emails and faxes to follow the CPP policy.	
2.5 The accused is to be offered pastoral care and counselling.	
2.6 The person who brought the concern or allegation to the attention of the MT is to be	
offered support and counselling. The level of information regarding progress and	
outcomes of the investigation given to the person is at the discretion of the team.	
2.7 Once authorities have been informed, such as police, and they take over the legal	
proceedings of an investigation, an internal investigation will still need to be	
completed. Section D covers this in full.	
This section is to be followed if the initial investigation shows there is evidence that the	
concern or allegation is NOT true.	
C. INVESTIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN	
3.1 MT informs Board Chairperson of allegation and management plan. Ongoing	
communication of progress to be made to him/her.	
3.2. Full investigation begins. Although the initial investigation showed that it is unlikely	
to be true, it is imperative that it is fully investigated.	
3.3 If at any time evidence suggests there is truth in the allegation, then section B is to be	
followed.	
3.4 If the investigation proves that the allegations are not true, then the following must	
occur.	
3.4.1 The person who made the allegation must be interviewed, the outcomes discussed	
and reasons why the allegation was made initially. Follow up pastoral care and	
counselling are to be given.	
3.4.2 The alleged offender is to be fully reinstated	
3.4.3 The child and/or caregivers to be given information (depending on the age and	
situation) regarding the situation and the results. If the child was the person who made	
the initial allegation, counseling and help is to be given and reasons as to why the	
child acted in the manner he/she did.	
This section is to be completed once the investigation has been completed, and the	
authorities have taken over the legal proceedings of the accused, or the investigation has	
shown that the allegation was not true, and the case is closed.	
D. REVIEW OF INVESTIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN	
4.1 MT is to meet to review the procedure and results of the investigation. This will	
involve the evaluation of the CPP and the procedures and recommendations for	
changes to the CPP.	
4.1.1 Were all procedures followed as per the CPP? Were the procedures effective? What	
changes are to be recommended, with reasons?	
4.2 Review of the situation – it is important that there is a full review of why the situation	
occurred. The MT is to evaluate the event, and how it happened. Strategies need be	
put in place to guard against a re-occurrence of a similar abuse situation, or alleged	
situation.	
4.2. Are all people involved being cared for and counseled, given the support and	
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MANAGEMENT TEAM

1. TEAM LEADER	
POSITION	
2. TEAM MEMBER	-
POSITION	
3. TEAM MEMBER	_
POSITION	-
4. TEAM MEMBER	_
POSITION	-
Team Member Designated to be Media Spokesperson	
The team leader is to complete this form, throughout the pr members are to check that documentation has been finalized,	
I have followed the CPP throughout this incident. The process continue.	is now complete. Confidentiality in this matter will
Team Leader: (Name)	

Date:
Date:
Date:
Date: