



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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PURPOSE

Canadian Feed the Children (“CFTC”) is steadfast in its commitment to preventing child abuse. CFTC is committed to child protection in all aspects of its work, in every region and country, and believes that all children have the right to safety and protection. Protection of children is part of a collective responsibility of the national and international community.

CFTC is committed to upholding, respecting, and being in alignment with international and national frameworks, laws and standards regarding the protection of children. CFTC also recognizes that Partnering organizations, the recipients of CFTC funding, have a legal and ethical responsibility to prevent child abuse. CFTC expects all Partnering organizations to uphold and remain committed to the highest international standards for protecting children.

In working with many cultures and ethnic groups, CFTC also recognizes that while there can be cultural differences in appropriate behaviours towards children, culture is never an excuse to cause harm to a child. CFTC is committed to working in a manner which reflects respect and integrity and honors diversity and gender. As such, it is imperative that anyone representing CFTC be responsible for ensuring their actions (or inactions) do not result in any harm to children. The purpose of this policy is to lay out the requirements, reporting procedures and behavioral expectations for all those who work with or represent CFTC.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are intended to provide clarity and do not replace the legal definitions applicable under the criminal and/or civil codes of any state, province, territory or country.

‘Child’ refers to any person under the age of 18 years old unless age of majority is defined differently by local legislation.

‘Child abuse’ is any form of physical, emotional and/or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that causes or has the potential to cause physical or emotional damage to a child. A common characteristic of all forms of abuse and neglect against children is a misuse of power, authority and/or breach of trust.

‘CFTC worker’ includes CFTC employees, volunteers and independent consultants and others who perform work for or represent CFTC. For certainty, nothing in this policy creates an employment relationship between CFTC and any person.

‘Partnering organization’ means an organization that is in receipt of funding through CFTC.

‘Ultimate beneficiary’ means a beneficiary of a Partnering organization (i.e. a child).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all CFTC workers and any other person who represents or acts on behalf of CFTC. CFTC will make this policy publicly available and will also produce it to stakeholders upon request.

POLICY

1. All CFTC workers are responsible for maintaining an environment that prevents child abuse and protects children.
2. CFTC workers are required to comply with this policy at all times. Failure to comply with any part of the Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of the CFTC worker's employment/contract.
3. As part of the hiring process, appropriate criminal background checks are required for all CFTC workers in accordance with applicable policies and laws.
4. Child abuse by any CFTC worker constitutes an act of gross misconduct that constitutes just cause for the summary dismissal of a CFTC employee and/or termination of any contract or relationship without notice.
5. Sexual activity or contact of any kind between any CFTC worker and a child (person under the age of 18) is strictly prohibited, regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally.
6. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex (including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or abusive behaviour) is strictly prohibited.
7. Sexual relationships between any CFTC workers and children are strictly prohibited at all times.
8. When working for or representing CFTC, everyone is expected to be aware of and accountable for their behaviours, boundaries and language. If a CFTC worker is unsure as to whether behavior or language could violate this policy, the CFTC worker should seek the advice of their Supervisor, a Manager, Director or a member of the CFTC senior leadership team.
9. CFTC workers are prohibited from doing anything, inside or outside of work that may place a child in a compromising position (i.e. providing gifts, showing favoritism).
10. CFTC workers are prohibited from connecting or communicating with the children of Partnering organizations, through social media without prior written approval of CFTC management, in accordance with the CFTC digital communication and social media protocols.
11. When there is approved contact with a child, the following will apply:
 - a. CFTC workers must never be alone with a child or place themselves in a vulnerable or compromising position (i.e. alone behind closed doors, alone in a car, or alone and out of sight of other adults).
 - b. CFTC workers must follow the direction of the Partnering organization and/or the CFTC representative with respect to their interactions with each child.
 - c. CFTC workers must never touch a child or speak or act in a manner that could be perceived as sexual, abusive or harmful towards a child.
 - d. CFTC workers must never use language or act in a way that causes fear, harm, abuse or intimidation of a child (i.e. swearing, threatening, bullying, demeaning, ignoring).
 - e. CFTC workers must never hire, attempt to hire or condone the hiring of a child for labour.
 - f. CFTC workers must never threaten, imply to use, condone or use physical punishment or physical force of any form, against a child.
 - g. CFTC workers must never condone, encourage or participate in behaviour with children that is illegal, bullying, threatening, harmful, unsafe or abusive, including harmful traditional practices or spiritual and ritualistic abuse.
12. CFTC workers are required to adhere to the CFTC procedures (i.e. digital communications and social media) and obtain advanced, expressed permission before publishing or presenting electronically or otherwise images or information about a child who is represented by a partnering organization.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABUSE

1. Where a CFTC worker has knowledge of, or a reason to suspect a child is being harmed or abused by a fellow CFTC worker, member of a partnering organization, or another person, the CFTC worker must immediately report such concerns to their immediate Supervisor, Manager or Director.
2. If the CFTC worker cannot immediately reach their immediate Supervisor, or if the person suspected of Child abuse is their immediate Supervisor, a report should be made to a member of CFTC senior leadership team as identified in the Global Staff Directory.
3. The report should include as much detail as possible, including who was involved, what happened, when and where it happened, and the names of any other potential witnesses.
4. A Supervisor, Manager or Director who receives a complaint or allegation of child abuse is to immediately notify a member of the senior leadership (as identified in the Global Staff Directory) team along with the President & CEO of CFTC who will then assess the complaint or allegation and determine next steps.
5. The President & CEO is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate investigation or follow-up is conducted. The President & CEO (or their designate) is also responsible for ensuring that a report was made to local law enforcement in accordance with local laws.
6. If the situation occurred with an Indigenous child either within the community, or any aspect of the Partner's program, the Band Council CP Reporting policies and the provincial/territorial child protection acts inform next steps. The President & CEO ensures that reporting requirements to Global Affairs Canada (GAC) are met when CFTC is implementing a GAC funded project.
7. The President & CEO will notify the Chair of the Board of any allegations or complaints of Child abuse within 48 hours.
8. CFTC workers must cooperate with all investigations related to this policy. This includes cooperating with local law enforcement personnel.
9. There will be no retaliation against any person who reports suspected Child abuse in good faith.
10. A CFTC worker who makes a complaint of Child abuse that they know to be false, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, contract or relationship.
11. Confidentiality with respect to the incident and any persons involved will be respected to the extent practicable. All CFTC workers must take every reasonable step to protect the identity and confidentiality of the child or children involved.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY

Compliance with this policy is an express term of employment with CFTC. As noted above, failure to comply with any part of the policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of the CFTC worker’s employment/contract.

ADMINISTRATION

CFTC workers are to receive, read, understand, agree to comply and sign a copy of this Policy as part of their orientation and thereafter on an annual basis. Signed copies will be kept in the personnel file. CFTC workers will receive appropriate training on this policy, child protection and the prevention of abuse that is appropriate to the worker’s role and responsibilities. The Board of Directors of CFTC will also review this policy at least annually.

CHILD PROTECTION IN THE PROGRAMS OF PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

As part of the funding agreement or contract with CFTC, all Partnering organizations are asked to commit to upholding the highest international standards for preventing Child abuse. CFTC strongly recommends to all Partnering organizations that they carefully consider how they design and deliver their programs to reduce risks for Child abuse. CFTC fully believes that all Partnering organizations should ensure that child participation in their respective programs is voluntary and inclusive.

I, (print name) _____ have fully read, understand, and agree to comply with this Child Protection Policy.

Signature

Date Signed