



Save the Children



Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy

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Where can I get help?

Please contact the Safeguarding Team for further advice or support:

safeguarding@savethechildren.org.au

PART 1: POLICY STATEMENTS

Why do we need this policy?

This policy explains:

How we prevent, manage, and respond to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment incidents at Save the Children Australia

SEAH means Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. **PSEAH** means the 'Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.'

When programs are funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), there are added requirements under DFAT's Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy ([DFAT PSEAH Policy](#)).

Scope

This policy applies to adults in the communities we engage with through our programs or service delivery. We call these **community members** throughout this policy.

This **does not** include children or young people or Save the Children staff.

- For children and young people, read Save the Children's [Child Safeguarding Policy](#).
- For issues that happen in our workplace, please read Save the Children's Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, and Exploitation Policy.

Our Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Principles

1. Zero Tolerance

Save the Children does not tolerate any SEAH incidents or staff ignoring them.

2. Victim/Survivor Needs

Concerns can be raised safely without fear of retaliation or unfair treatment. Concerns are handled confidentially, and we respect the rights and wishes of victim/survivors.

3. Strong Leadership and Culture

Our leaders set clear behaviour expectations for staff and partners. We make sure everyone is skilled, confident and understands their responsibilities. We conduct relevant background checks.

4. Gender Inequality and Other Power Imbalances

SEAH risks are higher where there is power imbalance and inequality. Please see our [Gender Equality Policy](#) on how we work to address this.



What is your responsibility?

This policy applies to all staff, representatives, and partners of Save the Children Australia

1. You must always follow our Code of Conduct and this policy.
2. You must report any SEAH incidents to your manager.
3. You must enter any incidents into [Donesafe](#) (our incident management system) within 24 hours.
4. You must complete the PSEAH online training program.
5. You must focus on the victim/survivor if there has been a SEAH incident. This means prioritising their needs, wishes and safety.
6. **Leaders** must set a good example and create a safe environment.
7. **Program managers** must ensure partners have a good understanding of PSEAH.

Any form of SEAH against community members is against this policy and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal and criminal proceedings. For partners, breaches can lead to the termination of agreements and criminal proceedings.

PART 2: OUR STANDARDS

Language and behaviour

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Report SEAH concerns immediately✓ Treat everyone with respect.✓ Ensure victims/survivors are safe and supported.✓ Listen to community members and inform them of their rights.✓ Disclose any civil judgments or criminal convictions related to SEAH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Use inappropriate, harassing or abusive language or behaviour.✗ Ignore SEAH related risks in programs.

Physical contact

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and respectful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Engage in sexually abusive or exploitative relationships or activities.✗ Sexually harass community members.✗ Threaten to sexually abuse, exploit, or harass community members.✗ Engage in sexual activity or relationships with community members.✗ Request sexual favours from community members in exchange for anything.✗ Engage in transactional sex or hire sex workers, regardless of local or national laws or norms about sex work, or the laws of your home country or the location in question.✗ Engage in close personal relationships (fraternisation) with community members.

Professional boundaries

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Always make sure another staff member is present when working with community members.✓ Maintain professional boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Share personal contact details with community members.

Privacy and digital safeguarding

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Check with the Save the Children local office before taking photos and follow the media and communication policies.✓ Follow the Storytelling and Image Policy, the Social Media Standards, and the Information and Technology Policy and Guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Use Save the Children IT systems or devices to access, store, or share pornographic or exploitative content.✗ Use technology to sexually abuse, harass or exploit community members.

PART 3: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Reporting concerns

Report all SEAH incidents relating to **community members only** using [Donesafe](#). This should be done within 24 hours.

If the victim is in immediate danger, call Emergency Services

- Australia: 000
- Papua New Guinea: 000
- Solomon Islands: 988 (Fire & Emergency Services), 999 (Police)
- Vanuatu: 111, 22222 (Police) or 22100 (Ambulance)
- Tonga: 911, 922 (Police), 999 (Fire), or 933 (Ambulance)



For help with reporting, contact the safeguarding team: safeguarding@savethechildren.org.au
[Nikki Holmes, Head of Safeguarding](#) or [Anja Wiersing, Senior Safeguarding Advisor](#)

Remember!

If your concern relates to the bullying, harassment, discrimination, or exploitation of a Save the Children staff member, contact your line manager or the People and Culture team: people.culture@savethechildren.org.au

Reporting Considerations:

- You can report without fear of retaliation and will receive support throughout the process.
- Use the [whistle-blower](#) process if needed.
- We take all concerns seriously, and your personal information will stay private and confidential.
- An external report may be required for the police and donors.
- Our internal reporting will not delay any external reporting requirements.
- You are expected to cooperate with external authorities during an investigation.
- Where a police investigation is underway, police clearance must be obtained before an internal process can start.

Did You Know?

We assume reports are made in good faith. Malicious reports are those made without merit, to harass, bully or harm, or where a person knowingly lies. These will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.

Incident Management

- Once a SEAH incident **concerning a community member** is reported, the Safeguarding team will assess it.
- If the incident is rated as 'significant,' 'severe,' or 'critical,' the **Safeguarding team** or **Safeguarding Technical Advisors** in the Pacific Country Offices will investigate.
- Negligible' or 'moderate' incidents are reviewed locally.



Refer to the [Desktop Review Protocol](#) on the incident management page for more information.

Part 4: AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

Keeping community members informed

- ✓ We share clear print and digital copies of key information contained in the PSEAH Policy emphasising our commitment to their safety.

Community participation

- ✓ We provide easy and inclusive ways for community members to give feedback and raise concerns.
- ✓ We actively seek the views and involvement of individuals and communities on issues that affect them, including through surveys and focus groups.

Risk management

- ✓ We consider the physical and online risks of SEAH to community members.
- ✓ We review risk assessments if a SEAH-related incident, near miss, or disclosure occurs.
- ✓ We regularly monitor and update risk assessments as necessary.

See the [Risk Management Policy](#) for more information on our risk management processes.

Appropriate people

- ✓ We have strong recruitment and screening processes.
- ✓ We ensure staff complete mandatory PSEAH training.

Safer partnerships

Partnership Agreements

Must have:

- ✓ A commitment to safeguarding.
- ✓ Agreed procedures for reporting and investigating safeguarding concerns, with a commitment to follow our reporting requirements.
- ✓ The Safer Partnership Core Standards to ensure clarity and safety with partners.
- ✓ Guidelines for information sharing, joint decision-making, and managing complaints/disputes.

Partner policies:

- ✓ If a partner uses our policy, they only need to sign one, either SCI or Save the Children's policy.
- ✓ If a partner wants to use their own PSEAH policy, it must meet or exceed the standards of our policy.
- ✓ DFAT-funded partners must have their own PSEAH policy that complies with DFAT's minimum standards.

APPENDIX

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Adult	Anyone over 18 years old.
Sexual Abuse	<p>Using power to involve someone in sexual activity. Sexual abuse includes both contact and non-contact behaviours.</p> <p>Contact behaviours include touching, fondling, rape, penetration with penis, finger or other objects into the mouth, anus or vagina, and sexual slavery.</p> <p>Non-contact behaviours include sending obscene or suggestive texts, using sexually explicit language, unwanted and/or uninvited exposure to pornography, and demands for sexualised photographs.</p>
Sexual Exploitation	When someone uses their power or trust to take advantage of another person for sexual or other benefits.
Sexual Harassment	Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that violates someone’s dignity or creates an offensive environment for that individual.
Fraternisation	Improper relationship involving preferential treatment.
Transactional Sex	The exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours.
Survivor-centered approach	Empowering survivors and prioritising their needs and rights.
Trauma-informed approach	<p>At the centre of a trauma informed approach is the commitment to do no harm.</p> <p>Save the Children recognises the signs and indicators of trauma (including vicarious trauma) and responds by ensuring policies, procedures, operations, and organisational culture is trauma-informed and responsive.</p>
Gender Equality	No discrimination on the basis of sex or gender.
Representatives	<p>Save the Children Australia permanent, maximum term and casual staff, trustees and Board members, volunteers, interns, work experience/placement students and individual consultants (referred to as ‘representatives’).</p> <p>Donors, journalists, celebrities, politicians and other people who visit Save the Children programs or offices and come into contact with children must be made aware this Policy applies to them (during this time they are referred to as ‘representatives’).</p>
Partners	Individuals, groups or organisations (including consortiums) who have a formal/contractual relationship with Save the Children Australia involving any contact with children (referred to as partners or staff of partner agencies).