



CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

YAYOTSE ORGANIZATION CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose

This Child Safeguarding Policy is Yayotse unconditional commitment to ensuring that all children we work with are safe and protected from all forms of harm and abuse across all our programs and projects. This policy outlines our approach to creating nurturing, protective, and safe environment that prevents and responds to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence in all form in accordance to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Specifically, the UNCRC states that “children have the right to be protected from being hurt or mistreated, physically or mentally, and that they should be properly cared for and protected from violence and abuse.”

Scope

This policy applies to all board members, staff, volunteers, interns, mentors, facilitators, consultants, vendors, parents, guardians, community members, and partners working with or representing Yayotse in any capacity. It is rooted in the principles of UNCRC, FIFA Guardians Child Safeguarding Toolkit, Keeping Children Safe (KCS) Standards, International Safeguarding Children in Sport Standards, UNICEF, Africa Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Ghana Children’s Act, 1998 (Act 560) as amended, and Domestic Laws.

Guiding Principles

- Yayotse has zero tolerance for any form of abuse, harm, or exploitation, whether physical, emotional, and sexual or through neglect.
- Children’s safety and well-being are paramount. Best interests of the child are our primary concern.
- Children have the right to be heard, informed, involved, and respected in decisions that affect them.
- All children are protected regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, religion, or background.

Definitions

- **Child:** Any person under the age of 18 in line with the UNCRC.
- **Child Abuse:** Includes any form of physical, emotional, sexual, and bullying that results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, development, survival or dignity.
- **Neglect:** Persistent failure to provide a child’s basic physical and psychological needs (food, shelter, medical care, clothing, security).
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent bullying, humiliating, isolation, emotional maltreatment that affects a child’s emotional development.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing, exploitation, grooming, or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, shaking, visible harm or injury inflicted upon a child.
- **Safeguarding:** The proactive measures taken to protect children from harm.

This policy is mandatory and applies to all programs and partners of Yayotse.

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Responsibilities

The board, staff, volunteers, interns, mentors, facilitators, consultants, and partners working with or representing Yayotse in any capacity shall ensure compliance and oversight, follow safeguarding procedures, report concerns and sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

All Yayotse affiliates must:

1. Treat children with respect, kindness, and dignity at all times.
2. Treat children equally irrespective of gender, abilities, sexual orientation, etc.
3. Respect children's privacy, dignity, and rights at all times.
4. Avoid any inappropriate physical contact or favoritism.
5. Take responsibility for the physical safety of all children while in their care.
6. Create and maintain safe environment that prevents abuse.
7. Never hit, physically harm, or emotionally abuse a child.
8. Never deliberately shame or embarrass a child.
9. Avoid spending time alone with a child in a private setting.
10. Always work in visible and open spaces.
11. Never engage in any sexual activity, contact or inappropriate behavior with a child.
12. Use positive, non-violent forms of discipline.
13. Recognized that cultural norms, but ensure that child rights are protected.
14. Not take photographs or videos of children without consent.
15. Educate children about their rights and adhere to the child safeguarding policy.
16. Immediately report any concerns, suspicions, or incidents of abuse.

All staff are required to sign a declaration of commitment to this Code of Conduct.

Prevention Measures

- **Recruitment & Vetting:** Background checks for all who work with children.
- **Training:** Mandatory safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.
- **Supervision:** Adequate adult-to-child ratios and always working in visible, open spaces.
- **Photography & Media:** Obtain consent from guardians before using children's images.

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Reporting and Response Mechanism

- All suspicions, disclosures, or evidence of abuse must be reported immediately to the Child Safeguarding Focal Person.
- All reports are handled with discretion. Confidential channels are established for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Immediate steps will be taken to protect the child, investigate the concern, and take disciplinary or legal action if necessary.
- Victims will be referred to professional services (healthcare, legal, psychosocial support).

Implementation in Programs

- **Sports:** Safe coaching practices, trained CICs, girls-only safe sessions.
- **Education Programs:** Safe learning spaces, abuse-free learning, academic mentors.
- **Girls' Empowerment:** Empowerment through SRHR education and mentorship.
- **Climate & Environment:** Supervised outdoor activities with risk assessments.
- **Creative Arts:** Inclusion, safety in creative exploration and technical sessions.
- **Field Programs:** Safe equipment handling and protective measures.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is subject to reviewed periodically or when significant changes occur. Regular feedback is gathered from staff, children, and communities to improve effectiveness. It shall be updates in line with international child protection standards (UNCRC, Keeping Children Safe)

Contacts

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Approved by: Yayotse's Governing Board

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