

Summary of Viva Child Safeguarding Policy

I. Policy Statement

Viva believes that child protection is both an individual and a corporate responsibility.

Viva recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from abuse. We believe that it is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind.

As part of its vision and mission, Viva recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and is committed to protect them from harm and abuse. Viva believes that it is never acceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind and is committed to communicating this message through the organisation and through the Christian community of its networked constituents.

We believe that

1. Child protection is both an individual and corporate responsibility
2. All children and young people have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation and inequalities should be challenged.
3. All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential
4. The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
5. Everyone must take precautions and responsibility to help create a safe place for children and support their care and protection. This begins with everyone being well informed and aware of child protection issues
6. Openness must be encouraged about concerns relating to child protection matters because child abuse thrives in secrecy
7. Viva has a duty of care to children with whom we work and with whom our representatives work
8. Viva has a responsibility to ensure that all networking initiatives meet standards of protection for the children in their care.

Viva is committed to the protection of every child so that they can become all that God intends. As Christians, we affirm that children are created in the image of God and therefore have intrinsic worth. We believe that every child is born equal in God's sight with unique talents.

- We commit ourselves to protect, listen to, believe in and act for children. We will work with children to find ways to protect them from harm.
- We commit ourselves to speak up for children at risk in every possible arena
- We commit ourselves to providing a safe and positive environment
- We accept the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child as a basis for our understanding of the rights of children globally. A child is anyone under the age of 18 years. And this child protection policy applies to all children, whatever their race, religion, abilities and family background. We commit to work towards what is best for every child.
- We commit to obtain agreement of this policy from our staff, volunteers and board members and will review this policy at least every 3 years. relate to the designated Viva Staff member responsible for child protection matters in regions where Viva Network Consultants are based and in Mobilisation Offices

2. A definition of types of abuse are listed in the Viva Child Safeguarding Policy

For the purposes of this Child Protection Policy, all references to 'child', 'children', 'young person', 'young people', 'adolescent' and 'adolescents' – whether singular or plural – are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those under the age of 18 years, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3. Behaviour Protocols:

All Viva staff and volunteers working with or representing Viva are expected to treat children according to the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and should treat all children with professionalism, dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions. Viva expects anyone interacting with the children on its behalf to abide by its behaviour and child discipline good practice guidelines when interacting with children. Our behaviour protocols cover all: staff, volunteers, board members, interns, consultants, visitors, donors, parents, and guests, all of whom are expected to treat children with respect and dignity.

Staff and Volunteers representing Viva should,

- Avoid inappropriate dress and be culturally sensitive to the environment in which the project is based and avoid questionable behaviour, which could be misconstrued.
- Be visible to other adults when talking with children.
- Be aware that children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Be culturally sensitive to attitudes of physical contact. Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, rather than the staff member.
- Respect each child's boundaries and their right to privacy and help children to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they can do if they feel that there is a problem.
- Create and maintain an open culture in which any issues or concerns can be discussed.
- Be accountable to each other so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged.
- Develop a culture where children can talk about their contacts with members of staff and others openly.
- Agree with and sign the Visual images policy
- Make sure that only one person in the group takes photos

It is not appropriate for Staff and volunteers representing Viva to:

- Spend time alone with children.
- Invite children to the place where you are staying, especially where they will be alone with you.
- Employ any domestic staff under the age of 18.
- Take photographs of children without consent from the Project and the child.
- Use photos to raise funds unless there is a written agreement with Viva, the network and the project
- Upload photos of children onto personal facebook accounts
- Exchange addresses, email addresses or face book contacts with individual children

Staff and volunteers representing Viva must never:

- Act in ways that may abuse a child or may place a child at risk of abuse.
- Hit or otherwise assault or physically abuse children or discipline a child in a way that is against the Convention on the Rights of the Child. (A general guideline is no physical punishment, hitting, slapping, spanking and no verbal abuse such as shouting, swearing or use of demeaning language).
- Have a child or children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised unless authorised by the child's primary carers (e.g. parent or guardian) and with the agreement of a senior member of staff.
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working.
- Touch children in a manner, which is inappropriate. A general guideline is not to touch children inappropriately in areas that would normally be covered by shorts and t-shirt, but also includes kissing and tickling in an inappropriate way.
- Engage in physical activity that is sexually provocative, inappropriate, offensive or exploitative or could be construed as assault or abuse.
- Develop physical or sexual relationships with children, or relationships that could be deemed in any way exploitative or abusive.
- Expose children to inappropriate materials such as pornographic videos and literature.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, flirtatious, offensive or abusive.

- Do things for children of a personal nature that the children can do for themselves.
- Excuse, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in ways intended to shame or humiliate.
- Discriminate against, show different treatment to, or favour particular children while excluding others.

Viva Staff supervising visits to projects must

- Ensure that visitors are briefed on code of conduct and child protection issues and ensure all Viva staff, short-term volunteers and donors visiting program sites have signed a statement to say that they have read the Behaviour Protocol will respect it and understand that action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behaviour.
- Ensure that visitors to Viva partner networks will not be left unsupervised or that visitors are not left alone with children without another adult being in sight and be aware of situations that may present risks with regards to child protection and manage them accordingly, minimizing risks as far as possible.
- Ensure that visitors do not initiate inappropriate physical contact with children.
- Monitor the amount of photographs taken of children ensuring that photographers always respect the dignity of the child.
- Create and maintain an open culture in which any issues or concerns can be discussed and challenge any potentially abusive behaviour and report it and develop a culture where children can talk about their contacts with members of staff and others openly.

All Viva Staff and volunteers and visitors working with or representing Viva must sign a statement to say that they have read and will abide by this Behaviour Protocol and understand that disciplinary action will be taken in cases of inappropriate behaviour.

A Full Child safeguarding Policy also includes

- **Recruitment and Screening**
- **Responses to allegations**
- **Disciplinary Procedures for misconduct**
- **Education and training about the child safeguarding policy**
- **Communication guidelines**
- **List of responsibilities for safeguarding**