

VERSION 1.1

28/02/24

Soulidarity & HumanRights

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# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**GOVERNING DOCUMENT**



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## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

At Soulidarity & HumanRights, we are deeply committed to safeguarding children and ensuring their well-being in all aspects of our work. We recognize that our organization impacts children directly and indirectly through our programs, services, and interactions. We acknowledge the risks that this may present and are dedicated to implementing robust policies and procedures to prevent harm and respond effectively to any concerns that may arise.

### To fulfill our commitment, we will:

- Implement comprehensive policies and procedures designed to prevent harm to children in accordance with a 'Do no harm' approach and to respond appropriately to safeguarding their concerns. These policies will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practices and evolving needs and wants.
- Designate appropriate individuals within our organization to act as focal points for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns. These designated persons will undergo specialized training such as, but not limited to, 'Psychological First Aid'.
- Provide thorough safeguarding induction and training for all staff and volunteers to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children throughout the project period. This training will cover recognizing signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and maintaining professional boundaries.
- Establish a clear code of conduct outlining acceptable behavior when working with children and delineating professional boundaries. All staff and volunteers will be expected to adhere to this code rigorously and at all time.
- Respect and protect the privacy of children and their families in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other applicable privacy laws. We will handle personal data responsibly, securely, and transparently, ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to such information and solely for a predetermined duration.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices by implementing rigorous screening procedures, including background checks and reference verifications, for all individuals working with children.

Soulidarity & HumanRights is reiterating its dedication to protecting the rights and dignity of children. The Child Protection Policy serves as a reminder of the organization's fundamental purpose and the importance placed on ensuring the well-being of children in all aspects of its work. The statement aligns Soulidarity & HumanRights' safeguarding efforts with its broader mission and values. By emphasizing the protection of children's rights and dignity, the organization reinforces its commitment to promoting human rights, social justice, and equality for all individuals, especially children. Through these measures, Soulidarity & HumanRights reaffirms its unwavering commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of children, and we pledge to continuously strive for excellence in our safeguarding practices.

## SCOPE

This comprehensive Global Safeguarding Policy applies universally to all stakeholders affiliated with Souldarity & HumanRights, encompassing a diverse range of roles and relationships, including but not limited to:

- All permanent and temporary personnel
- Volunteers and interns
- External consultants
- Invited guests, spanning donors, media representatives, and journalists
- Partner organizations, such as local NGOs, governmental bodies and private enterprises
- Third-party service providers, including suppliers and contractors, when their involvement is deemed necessary

As a component of the partnership requirements, any stakeholder involved with Souldarity & HumanRights must exhibit the safeguarding measures implemented to minimize risks to children.

**The term Souldarity & HumanRights representatives' will be used to refer to all people from the list above and associated with Souldarity & HumanRights.**

## PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS DEFINED BY THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The safeguarding policy at Souldarity & HumanRights outlines a comprehensive list of behaviors and conduct that are strictly prohibited for every representative of the organization when interacting with children, youth, and adults. These prohibited behaviors and unacceptable conduct serve as essential guidelines to ensure the safety, well-being, and dignity of all individuals involved. While not exhaustive, the following behaviors are expressly prohibited:

**Physical Abuse:** Any form of physical violence, including hitting, punching, kicking, or otherwise physically harming individuals.

**Sexual Abuse:** Engaging in any form of sexual activity or exploitation with children, youth, or otherwise adolescent, including sexual harassment, coercion, or assault.

**Emotional Abuse:** Inflicting emotional harm through verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, or manipulation.

**Neglect:** Failing to provide adequate care, supervision, or support to meet the needs of children, youth, or otherwise adolescent under the organization's care.

**Discrimination:** Treating individuals unfairly or unfavorably based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or disability.

**Bullying and Harassment:** Engaging in bullying or harassment behavior, including verbal, physical, or online harassment, intimidation, or victimization.

**Exploitation:** Taking advantage of individuals' vulnerabilities for personal gain or benefit, including financial exploitation or manipulation.

**Boundary Violations:** Crossing professional boundaries by engaging in inappropriate relationships or interactions with individuals under the organization's care.

**Substance Abuse:** Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while engaging in activities related to Souldarity & HumanRights' mission.

**Failure to Report:** Neglecting to report safeguarding concerns or incidents promptly and appropriately, thereby endangering the safety and well-being of individuals.

## DO NO HARM

Soulidarity & HumanRights is firmly committed to upholding the principles of 'Do no harm' in order to 'Do more good' in all our endeavors. We recognize that our actions and interventions can have profound effects on the lives of children and vulnerable individuals we directly and indirectly interact with. Therefore, we pledge to prioritize their safety, well-being, and dignity in everything we do:

No.	Guiding Principles
#1	<b>Prevention of Harm</b> <i>The primary objective of our commitment to child protection effort(s) is to prevent harm to children. Be it direct or indirect.</i>
#2	<b>Avoidance of (Indirect) Harm</b> <i>Any representative in their relation to Soulidarity &amp; HumanRights must be vigilant as to avoid causing secondary harm. Include ensuring that interventions do not inadvertently stigmatize or marginalize children, their families or communities, and that confidentiality is maintained to protect their privacy and dignity in full accordance of the law.</i>
#3	<b>Ethical Decision-Making</b> <i>Any and all representatives operating within the confinements of Soulidarity &amp; HumanRights must carefully consider the potential consequences of their actions and decisions on children's well-being.</i>
#4	<b>Cultural &amp; Contextual Sensitivity</b> <i>Recognizing the diverse and cultural contexts whereby Soulidarity &amp; HumanRights operate within is essential in turning theory to practice. Representatives, therefore, must respect and value cultural differences, avoiding practices or interventions that may be harmful or overtly disrespectful to the children, their families or their respective communities.</i>
#5	<b>Trauma-Informed Approaches</b> <i>Understanding the impact of trauma on children's development and behavioral patterns are crucial for ensuring that our interventions are sensitive and supportive. Representatives should adopt trauma-informed approaches, such as Psychological First Aid, in order to minimize the risk of triggers.</i>
#6	<b>Promotion of Positive Development</b> <i>Soulidarity recognizes that simply avoiding harm is not enough; we are committed to actively promoting the positive development and well-being of children and their communities. Our interventions are designed to create opportunities for growth, empowerment, and resilience-building.</i>

Soulidarity and HumanRight's child safeguarding policy underscores the organization's unwavering commitment to safeguarding all children, irrespective of their individual characteristics or attributes. It acknowledges the dynamic nature of risks faced by children and the necessity for varied approaches in addressing these risks. As a direct result, the policy emphasizes that safeguarding children is a responsibility that applies to all staff and associates, not only during working hours but also in their personal lives, recognizing their

role as representatives of the organization at all times. The commitment to 'Do no harm' and 'Do more good' outlines the organization's proactive approach to identifying and managing risks, understanding that while complete elimination of harm may not be possible, every effort must be made to minimize risks and address concerns effectively.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

By following the stages of risk assessment, any Soulidarity & HumanRights representative(s) should systematically identify, analyze, evaluate, and mitigate risks associated with all activities and interactions with children, thereby promoting the safety, well-being, and rights of children in all aspects of work.

No.	Guidelines
#1	<b>Establishing Context, Scope, and Setting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Define the context, including mission objectives and/or activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Determine the scope of the risk assessment and the settings in which the operation function.</i></li> </ul>
#2	<b>Identifying Potential Impact on Children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify all areas of the operations that involve contact with children or have the potential to impact children directly or indirectly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Consider both physical and virtual interactions with children, as well as any products, services, or programs offered.</i></li> </ul>
#3	<b>Identifying and Analyzing Potential Risks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify potential risks associated with any activities, including harm, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, neglect, or other adverse outcomes for children.</i></li> <li>• <i>Analyze the nature and extent of these risks, considering factors such as frequency, severity, and duration.</i></li> </ul>
#4	<b>Evaluating Risks in Terms of Likelihood and Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Assess the likelihood that identified risks could occur based on available evidence and past experiences.</i></li> <li>• <i>Evaluate the potential impact of these risks on children in terms of potential physical, psychological, emotional, and social harm.</i></li> </ul>
#5	<b>Implementing Risk Mitigation Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop and implement strategies to minimize and prevent identified risks, including policies, procedures, guidelines, and control measures.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensure that safeguarding measures are integrated into all aspects of organizational operations and activities.</i></li> </ul>
#6	<b>Reviewing Risks Registry and Preventative Measures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Conduct regular reviews of implemented risk mitigation strategies to assess their effectiveness in minimizing potential risks to children.</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitor the implementation of preventative measures to ensure adherence and identify any areas requiring improvement or adjustment.</i></li> <li>• <i>Proactively identify and manage potential risks, thereby reducing the likelihood of negative impacts on their objectives and operations, by adding the risks to the Risk Registry.</i></li> </ul>

# POLICY: SAFE RECRUITMENT

In accordance with our commitment to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, Soulidity & HumanRights has established comprehensive procedures for the recruitment of personnel. These procedures aim to ensure that individuals engaged in our organization uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct and contribute positively to our mission. Our safe recruitment procedures encompass the following steps:

No.	Guidelines
#1	<b>Job Analysis and Description</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Thoroughly analyze the role to assess potential interactions with children and associated risks.</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop clear job descriptions and terms of reference for all positions, including short-term contracts and consultant roles.</i></li> </ul>
#2	<b>Selection Criteria</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Define selection criteria that outline the relevant experience required for roles involving direct engagement with children.</i></li> </ul>
#3	<b>Job Postings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Include a commitment to safeguarding children in all job postings sent to prospective candidates.</i></li> </ul>
#4	<b>Application Forms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Develop application forms that request to obtain information on a candidate's past convictions or pending disciplinary proceedings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Request documentation to validate identity and relevant qualifications.</i></li> </ul>
#5	<b>Interview Process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish a well-structured interview process, ensuring interviewers possess adequate experience and knowledge in child safeguarding and best practices.</i></li> <li>• <i>Include specific questions in interviews to assess candidates' attitudes and values regarding child protection.</i></li> </ul>
#6	<b>References:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Obtain up to three references, including some from previous employers or individuals knowledgeable about the candidate's experience and suitability for working with children.</i></li> <li>• <i>Verify the identity of referees to ensure authenticity.</i></li> </ul>
#7	<b>Background Checks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Conduct thorough background checks whenever possible, verifying candidates' backgrounds and ensuring alignment with organizational standards and child safeguarding protocols.</i></li> </ul>

These safe recruitment procedures serve as essential guidelines to uphold the safety, well-being, and dignity of all individuals engaged in Soulidity & HumanRights' mission. By adhering to these procedures, we reaffirm our commitment to creating safe and supportive environments for children and promoting their rights worldwide.

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility	Action
Director(s) and Senior Manager(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and enforce child protection policies and procedures, ensuring adherence throughout the organization.</li> <li>• Provide oversight, support, and resource allocation for effective implementation, including addressing escalated concerns and liaising with authorities.</li> </ul>
Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate child safeguarding into operational processes and ensure compliance through recruitment procedures and staff support.</li> <li>• Coordinate responses to safeguarding incidents, monitor adherence to protocols, and update operational guidelines for enhanced safeguarding practices.</li> </ul>
Community Engagement Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement community-based initiatives and facilitate partnerships to promote awareness and empower communities in safeguarding children.</li> <li>• Provide training for community members, establish feedback mechanisms, and evaluate and adjust engagement strategies to address emerging needs.</li> </ul>
Communication & Outreach Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and disseminate awareness materials, coordinate campaigns, and ensure ethical communication standards are met.</li> <li>• Manage media inquiries, responses, and advocacy efforts, monitoring media coverage and impact on child protection discourse and policy.</li> </ul>

## RECOGNISE, RESPOND & REPORT

Within Souldarity & Human Rights, it is imperative that representatives are equipped with the knowledge to recognize signs and symptoms of harm and abuse, understanding that these indicators may not always be apparent. By familiarizing staff and volunteers with potential warning signs through obligatory courses, they should be better prepared to identify instances of abuse and as a result — take appropriate action.

All Souldarity & HumanRights representatives are obligated under this policy to report all concerns, suspicions and potential breaches as soon as possible within the next 24 hours. Failure to report can place any Souldarity & HumanRights representative in a position of breaching the policies and the obligation to report, which may lead to disciplinary measures and may be defined as gross misconduct.

Recognizing the unique risks and circumstances of the children served by Souldarity & HumanRights is crucial in determining the level of detail staff and volunteers require in recognizing various forms of harm and abuse. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that all members of the organization recognize that they are mainly responsible for documenting safeguarding concerns and taking any necessary actions in response:

No.	Procedure
#1	<b>Identification of Concerns</b> <i>Identifying any signs, symptoms, or behaviors that raise concerns about the safety or well-being of a child risk.</i>
#2	<b>Documentation</b> <i>Documentation should include detailed information about the nature of the concern, relevant observations or incidents, any disclosures made by the individual at risk, and any other pertinent information.</i>
#3	<b>Assessment of Risk</b> <i>Assessment may involve considering factors such as the severity and frequency of the concern, the vulnerability of the individual, and any immediate safety concerns.</i>
#4	<b>Decision-Making</b> <i>Based on the assessment of risk, a decision is made regarding the appropriate course of action. This may include initiating immediate safeguarding measures to ensure the safety of the individual, notifying relevant authorities or agencies, or implementing support interventions to address the concerns identified.</i>
#5	<b>Reporting</b> <i>If the safeguarding concern(s) involves potential abuse or harm, it <u>must</u> be reported to the designated authorities or agencies as per organizational policies and legal requirements.</i>
#6	<b>Support &amp; Follow-Up</b> <i>Individuals involved in raising safeguarding concerns should be provided with appropriate support and guidance throughout the process.</i>
#7	<b>Reflection &amp; Learning</b> <i>It is essential to reflect on the handling of safeguarding concerns and identify any lessons learned or areas for improvement.</i>

Additionally, a culture whereby individuals feel supported in speaking up against wrongdoing is paramount for Souldarity & HumanRights code values. While we recognize that it may be challenging to take action, it is vital to stand up for those who may not be able to advocate for themselves. It is, accordingly, crucial to address any fears or hesitations individuals may have about reporting, emphasizing that speaking up is always the right thing to do.

Furthermore, Souldarity & HumanRights ensure that individuals who report concerns are protected from harm or criticism. A respect and maintenance of privacy is key in this regard.

Depending on the circumstances, different types of reports may be necessary, including

- internal incident reports
- referrals to social services, or even referrals to the police

What ever the case, these responses should be tailored to the specific needs and requirements of any and all individual(s) involved and then evaluated as to allow for an opportunity of learning.



## IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

The implementation and review of child safeguarding measures are crucial aspects of ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and relevance of our policies and procedures at Soulidity & HumanRights. In accordance with The International Child Safeguarding Standards, we have established a comprehensive framework for implementing safeguarding measures and conducting regular reviews to assess their efficacy and make necessary improvements.

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Our child safeguarding policy is disseminated widely among all staff, volunteers, partners, and relevant stakeholders to ensure understanding and adherence to safeguarding principles and procedures. A copy should always be available in any given area of operation.
- We provide regular training and capacity-building opportunities for staff and volunteers on child safeguarding policies, procedures, and best practices. This includes induction training for new recruits and ongoing training to reinforce knowledge and skills.
- Child safeguarding principles are integrated into the design, implementation, and evaluation of all our programs and activities. We ensure that safeguarding considerations are embedded at every stage of program development to minimize risks and promote the well-being of children.
- We designate trained individuals within our organization to act as focal points for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns. These designated personnel are responsible for overseeing the implementation of safeguarding measures and providing support to staff and/or volunteers.
- Clear communication channels and reporting mechanisms are established to facilitate the reporting of safeguarding concerns and incidents. Staff, volunteers, and stakeholders are informed about how to report concerns confidentially and without fear of reprisal.

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### REVIEW

- We conduct annual evaluations and monitoring of our child safeguarding policy, procedures, and practices to assess their effectiveness in preventing harm and promoting the well-being of children. This includes reviewing incident reports, feedback from our stakeholders, and compliance with safeguarding protocols as laid out in the policy.
- We actively seek feedback from staff, volunteers, children, and other stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and learn from past experiences. Feedback mechanisms are established during weekly meetings to encourage open communication and continuous learning opportunities.
- Periodic external reviews are conducted to assess our compliance with international child safeguarding standards and identify areas for enhancement. This may involve engaging recognized children rights organizations.
- Based on the findings of evaluations, feedback, and external reviews, we revise and update our child safeguarding policies and procedures as necessary. This ensures

that our safeguarding measures remain current, relevant, and responsive to evolving risks and best practices.

- All review processes, findings, and updates to our child safeguarding policies and procedures are documented systematically and transparently. This documentation is accessible to staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and external auditors to demonstrate our commitment to accountability and continuous improvement.

By implementing robust safeguarding measures and conducting regular reviews, Soulidity & HumanRights is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of child protection and ensuring the safety and well-being of children in all our programs and activities.

## POLICY DETAILS

<b>Policy Applies To</b>	Every Soulidity & HumanRights representative
<b>Responsible</b>	Soulidity & HumanRights board
<b>Review Frequency</b>	Annually
<b>Version</b>	1.1
<b>Commencement date</b>	28 February 2024

### To demonstrate compliance with the Standard, the following documentation should serve as evidence:

- Signed copies of the policy by the management board, affirming organizational commitment.
- Translations of the policy into local languages, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.
- Instances showcasing the promotion of the policy, inclusive of dissemination to partners, children, and communities, illustrating proactive engagement and implementation efforts.
- Documentation comprising training plans, records of course attendance, and evaluations of courses attended.
- Code(s) of conduct.

DATE	SIGN	COMMENT
28/02	JA + PJ	Framework established. Content transferred from previous governing document(s).