



## Child Protection Policy

### Details

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure Owner</b>	CEO Office	
<b>Approved by</b>	ERFA Board of Directors	
<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Date of Last Revision</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
2014	December 2020	December 2022

### Abbreviations

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
CPP	Child Protection Policy
CPO	Child Protection Officer
ERFA	Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia)
ICC	Incident, Complaints and Compliments Register
PCPP	Program-specific Child Protection Policy
PSEAH	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment

### Definitions

Associates	Anyone in the community who interacts with ERFA Staff and Partners
ACFID Member	A not-for-profit organisation that has obtained accreditation with ACFID
Beneficiaries	Children and adults who participate in and benefit from ERFA-funded programs
Donors	Members of the public who contribute to ERFA in cash or in kind
Partner	Any organisation which has an MOU / contract with / or receives funding from ERFA
Program	Programs are overarching development approaches and initiatives that set priorities and guide project outcomes, results and activities. Programs can comprise ministries or entities
Projects	Projects are the development activities of a Program supported by ERFA
Staff	Employees, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, volunteers, employers and any other person who performs work for ERFA or ERFK

### Incident reporting

All CP incidents, suspected or alleged, are to be reported to the ERFA CEO within 24 hours of them first being reported. For more information on incident reporting please see Section 8.0 .

<b>ERFA CEO contact for CP incident reporting</b>	<a href="mailto:ceo@erf.org.au">ceo@erf.org.au</a> or +61 7 3621 9649
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### Contact information

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ACFID	<a href="http://www.acfid.asn.au">http://www.acfid.asn.au</a> or +61 6 02 6285 1816

### Attached documents

- Child Protection Code of Conduct and Self-declaration form
- CP Incident Reporting Flowchart
- Complaints Notice

### Related policies

- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment Policy

### Compliance

Adherence to this CPP is a mandatory requirement for all Staff and associates that act for, represent or visit ERFA and ERFA funded programs. Failure by ERFA-funded Partners to fully comply with any aspect of this policy could result in immediate termination of funding.

### Implementation Plan

- Included as part of staff induction
- Included as part of briefing documents for all excursions and programs where staff/volunteers and contractors of ERFA are involved
- Specific reference to CPP in partnership agreements/funding contracts
- Incorporated in Program Design and Funding Application forms
- Specific reference in quarterly monitoring report templates and annual acquittal forms

### Organisational overview

The Edmund Rice Foundation Australia (ERFA) believes education is the key to sustainable change. We are an international development organisation that focuses on sustainable and transformational education. We operate in some of the poorest communities in the world, including Africa, East Timor, the Philippines, and Papua New Guinea. We also run domestic programs in Australia. ERFA's goal is to design and implement high impact education programs that will enable our beneficiaries to stand independently and break free from the cycle of poverty. ERFA-funded education programs range from kindergartens to advanced microfinance projects and are designed with the needs of the community at their core.

### Legal definitions

Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia) is a company limited by guarantee. The objects of the company are set out in clause 3 of ERFA's constitution. Clause 3 (f) reads as follows:

*To develop partnerships with overseas aid agencies or formal arrangements with other delivery agents related to the Company but resident in Developing Countries for the implementation of the objects in paragraph (a).*

One of ERFA's roles is to act as trustee of the Edmund Rice Overseas Aid Fund.

Throughout its policies and official documentation ERFA uses the term **Partners** for those organisations with which it has formed alliances in developing countries for the receipt of overseas aid funding for the in-country delivery of education programs. Whilst ERFA has an active, engaged and qualitative role with these programs, working to build capacity and maximise the impact of best practice development outcomes, these are not partnerships in the legal sense. Rather they are alliances that ERFA has formed with in-country organisations with whom ERFA has communicated its vision, mission, values, policies and expectations with respect to sustainable development and whose own vision, mission, values, policies and development goals are congruent with those of ERFA. The in-country organisations implement the programs and ERFA supports them.

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## **1.0 Policy overview**

ERFA is committed to the protection of children from harm, abuse and exploitation. Children have a right to survival, development, protection and participation as stated in the United Nations Conventions on the Right of the Child. ERFA upholds these rights and aims at all times to provide the safest possible environment for children.

The main objective of this Child Protection Policy (CPP) is to ensure the safeguarding of children, both by preventing and responding to cases of child abuse as encountered by ERFA or ERFA's domestic and overseas partners. This CPP strives to:

- educate Staff, Partners and associates about child abuse and promote a child-friendly culture where everyone is committed to keeping children safe;
- create an open and aware environment where concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a child can be raised and managed in a fair and just manner, which protects the rights of all;
- provide guidance on how to respond to concerns and allegations of child abuse;
- provide guidance on how to work respectfully and effectively with children;
- adhere to local and international child protection criminal laws, which prohibit the abuse and exploitation of children. These include applicable local laws as well as international laws and Conventions that prohibit all forms of child abuse and child exploitation, including child sex tourism, child sex trafficking, child labour and child pornography.

This CPP has been developed to provide instruction and guidance on the expected behaviors of ERFA's Staff, Partners and associates when interacting and engaging with children.

## **2.0 ACFID context**

The ACFID Code of Conduct requires that members have in place a CPP that satisfies the following conditions as a minimum:

- 1.4.1 demonstrates an organisational commitment to the safeguarding of children;
- 1.4.2 advances child safeguarding behaviours and applies to all personnel, partners and project visitors;
- 1.4.3 includes a documented child safeguarding incident reporting procedure and complaints handling procedure that aligns with principles of privacy and promotes safety and dignity.

This CPP completely satisfies these conditions.

The ACFID Code of Conduct stipulates additional requirements for Members like ERFA whose initiatives involve children. These initiatives must:

- 2.5.1 emphasise children's participation;
- 2.5.2 enable children's views to influence initiative designs;
- 2.5.3 include complaints handling processes that are child-friendly.

These conditions are also satisfied and addressed within this CPP.

## **3.0 Defining child abuse**

Child abuse is a global problem that affects both girls and boys. It is rooted in cultural, economic and social practices. Children are abused physically, sexually, emotionally and through neglect. Some children are more vulnerable to abuse than others. Children living in extreme poverty, children with disabilities, children from minority groups, children living in residential care, children living in emergency or conflict situations and children on the move experience a high risk of abuse.

While most child abuse occurs within families and communities, children also experience abuse and exploitation in organisations which provide them with support and services. Cases of physical abuse,

emotional abuse and neglect in child-focused organisations are less systematic and usually unplanned. It is usually the result of poor conditions, bad work practices and negligent management. However, child sexual abuse in organisations is often planned and premeditated. Child sex offenders target organisations working with children in order to gain access to children. They seek work in organisations that provide opportunities to make contact with children and an environment where their abuse may go undetected. Child sex offenders are attracted to organisations with inadequate child protection policies and procedures and may seek to work overseas in developing countries and development programs where child protection laws and law enforcement is weak and where children and their families are vulnerable to exploitation.

By the nature of its focus on education, particularly for those living in poverty, ERFA's work and that of the partner programs it funds have considerable exposure to highly vulnerable children. As such, it is imperative that ERFA implement a robust Child Protection Policy (CPP).

#### 4.0 Guiding principles

This CPP adheres to the following guiding principles and Commonwealth Legislation:

- [Criminal Code Act 1995](#). An Australian citizen or resident can be prosecuted for an offence against a child in another country under laws that have an extra-territorial application.
  - Division 272 (child sex offences outside Australia)
  - Division 273 (offences involving child pornography material or child abuse material outside Australia)
  - Division 474 (telecommunication offences, subdivision C)
- [Criminal Act 1914](#). This law sets out the laws that govern the way legal proceedings under the Criminal Code Act 1995 are conducted including the conduct of investigations and the protection of children involved in proceedings for sexual offences.
- The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) is the universal foundation for child protection. The fundamental principle of the Convention is that children have their own indivisible rights.

ERFA adheres to and strives to instil the following principles throughout every level of its organisation:

- Any form of child abuse and exploitation is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated.
- All children have a right to be safe at all times.
- All children are to be equally protected and assisted regardless of their gender, nationality, religious or political beliefs, family background, economic status, physical or mental health or criminal background.
- All decisions involving children are to ensure that the child receives the maximum benefit possible from the services provided, and that the positive impacts of any course of action outweigh any negative impacts.
- Where possible, children should be consulted in the development of the CPP and the implementation of child-safe practices.
- Children in programs supported by ERFA should be given opportunities to express their views on matters affecting them.

#### 5.0 Staff employment procedures

ERFA is committed to child-safe recruitment, selection and screening practices. These practices aim to recruit the safest and most suitable people to work in our programs. Our child-safe employment practices include:

- promoting our commitment to CP on our website, in promotional materials and in all job advertisements;
- providing job applicants with a copy of ERFA's CPP and ensuring they are aware of ERFA's screening requirements for job applicants;

- providing a comprehensive job description that includes CP selection criteria for all Staff positions;
- assessing all Staff positions for their individual CP risk potential. Positions that involve direct interaction with children are evaluated with the highest level of CP risk;
- requiring that applicants for high CP risk positions possess relevant qualifications and experience working with children;
- incorporating issues relevant to CP in staff performance reviews.

Job applicants wishing to work at ERFA directly, or in one of our domestic or overseas Partner organisations, either in the capacity as an employee, contractor, subcontractor, outworker, apprentice or trainee, work experience student, volunteer, or any other position which performs work for ERFA, are required to complete the following screening steps:

- Applicants must submit a detailed work history when applying for a position. This should contain comprehensive information about their background, such as dates, places of employment, education and other activities.
- Interviews will be conducted for all positions, ideally face-to-face, however telephone interviews may be necessary in the international context. Applicants will be asked to provide examples of their past experiences working with children. Applicants will be asked behavioural-based questions to determine their attitude towards CP and to ascertain their expected conduct around children.
- For high CP risk positions that involve direct interaction with children, applicants will have to complete a rigorous interview. The panel will attempt to investigate the applicant's motivations for working with children. Applicants will be asked value-based questions to determine their attitudes towards children, professional boundaries, accountability, team work and capacity to respond to ethical dilemmas.
- Applicants are required to submit a minimum of three reference checks. The candidate's most recent employer/supervisor must be one of these referees. ERFA will verify the identity of and make direct contact with each of the referees. Written references will not be accepted. ERFA reserves the right to request additional references.
- Applicants will be subjected to a police clearance or relevant criminal history checks depending on the country of work.
- Where the role involves direct interaction with children in Australia or overseas, applicants must possess a Working with Children Check accreditation (depending on the jurisdiction).
- Applicants are required to provide proof of their identity, i.e., a birth certificate, passport, or drivers licence. Original documents are required.
- All Staff positions are subject to a probationary period depending on the length of the contract.
- All Staff are required to read ERFA's CPP and sign ERFA's CP Code of Conduct and Self-declaration form.
- ERFA reserves the right to refuse employment or terminate any person's employment that may pose a risk to children.

## **6.0 Roles and responsibilities**

This CPP designates the difference between the roles of ERFA Staff the Child Protection Officer (CPO). The responsibilities of the CPO differ from regular Staff in important ways. Generally, the CPO is responsible for creating their own Program-specific Child Protection Policy (PCPP) and educating their Staff member's compliance with it. Each program that ERFA funds must designate at least one CPO.

### **6.1 Responsibilities of ERFA Staff**

The responsibilities of ERFA Staff are as follows:

- sign ERFA's CP Code of Conduct and Self-declaration form;
- adhere to their Program-specific Child Protection Policy (PCPP);

- continuously make themselves aware of potential risks to children;
- complete CP training as instructed by their CPO;
- report any witnesses, suspected or alleged incidents of child abuse in accordance with ERFA's CP Incident Reporting Flowchart (See Section X.0).

## **6.2 Responsibilities of CPOs**

The responsibilities of CPOs are as follows:

- sign ERFA's CP Code of Conduct and Self-declaration form;
- continuously make themselves aware of potential risks to children;
- create a PCPP and update it when necessary;
- monitor their Staff's compliance towards the PCPP;
- be on-site at all times when there is a potential for child interaction;
- provide regular CP training for their staff;
- publicly display the Complaints Notice in their local language;
- report any witnessed suspected or alleged incidents of child abuse in accordance with ERFA's CP Incident Reporting Flowchart (See Section 8.0);
- comply with ongoing CP monitoring by ERFA.

## **7.0 Partner compliance**

ERFA works continuously with its Partners to proactively recognise, assess and manage CP risks. ERFA commits to strengthening its Partners' ability to safeguard children by investing in targeted capacity building, training and awareness raising on CP. This is achieved by examining each program and its potential risk to children individually and on an ongoing basis. Programs that involve direct interaction with children are considered a higher risk and are subject to more stringent child protection assessments. ERFA reserves the right to terminate funding with a Partner if they breach this CPP.

### **7.1 Initial CP risk assessment**

ERFA conducts an initial CP risk assessment for every program as part of their funding application. As contained in our Funding Application Form, applicants are required to:

- indicate the profiles of their expected beneficiaries, including their age. This allows an ERFA assessor to determine whether the applicant's program involves interaction with children and hence, whether their program poses a high CP risk;
- indicate how they will arrange for their program beneficiaries to actively participate in the design and implementation of their program. For those programs that involve interaction with children, it is critical that children are involved in the design and implementation of the program. Giving children a voice and actively seeking their input is an effective method to create an inclusive environment and reduce the risk of child abuse.
- upload their PCPP. Programs that don't have an active PCPP will not be approved for ERFA funding;
- upload their completed DFAT Child Protection Risk Context document;
- specify the date of their most recent PCPP review;
- specify the date of their most recent CP training;
- indicate that they have read and are familiar with ERFA's CPP.

### **7.2 Quarterly CP risk assessment**

In addition, ERFA monitors the CP compliance of its funded Partners on a quarterly basis. As contained in our Quarterly Report, Partners are required to:

- indicate whether a CP incident occurred during the quarter;
- specify the actions taken if a CP incident occurred. Indicate whether ERFA was informed of the incident within 24 hours in accordance with ERFA's CP Incident Reporting Flowchart;
- indicate whether CP training was conducted during the quarter;

- if training was conducted, upload the materials used and other certification that specifies the date the training was conducted, the names of participant and the credentials of trainers or the facilitating organisation;
- indicate whether any updates have been made to their PCPP and to provide ERFA with the updated version;
- certify that any images or videos provided to ERFA for communications purposes adhere to ERFA's use of children's images and videos guidelines (See section 9.0).

If a program Partner has indicated that a CP incident occurred in their Quarterly Report submission, an ERFA assessor will verify ERFA's internal records to verify whether a record of the CP incident exists and whether it was reported in accordance with ERFA's CP Incident Reporting Flowchart. If there is an error in the incident reporting process, such as a lack of detail in the Incidents, Complaints and Compliments Reporting Form (ICC), an inconsistency between ERFA's internal records and the Partner's Quarterly Report submission, an uncompleted step in the Reporting Process or any other insufficiency that raises the concern of the assessor or breaches this CPP, the assessor will contact the Partner advising as such and submit a notice of the error to ERFA's Board of Advisors. In the event of a major error in a Partner's CP incident reporting, for example, a failure to notify ERFA within 24 hours of a reported CP incident, ERFA may have to terminate funding with the Partner.

### **7.3 Field monitoring**

ERFA conducts in-person monitoring visits of all of its Partners. Monitors will verify whether a Partner's PCPP is being enacted effectively. This may include checking whether a partner's PCPP is up to date, appraising whether Staff and designated CPOs are performing their roles correctly, and determining whether complaints notices are displayed publicly. Field monitoring is conducted on a random basis so Partners don't have time to prepare in advance.

## **8.0 Incident reporting**

It is mandatory for all ERFA Staff, Partners and Associates to report any witnessed, suspected or alleged incidents of child abuse or any breach of the CPP. They are to do so by filling out ERFA's Incidents, Complaints and Compliments Reporting Form (ICC) and submitting it to ERFA at [ceo@erf.org.au](mailto:ceo@erf.org.au) or +61 7 3621 9649. ERFA will take all concerns and reports of child abuse seriously and act on these reports immediately. These concerns may relate to a child, a Staff member, or any other person involved with or outside a Partner organisation.

ERFA will treat all concerns raised seriously and ensure that all parties are treated fairly and the principles of natural justice will be a prime consideration. All reports will be handled professionally, confidentially and expediently.

All reports made in good faith will be viewed as being made in the best interests of the child regardless of the outcomes of any investigation. ERFA will ensure that the interests of anyone reporting child abuse in good faith are protected.

The rights and welfare of the child are of prime importance. Every effort will be made to protect the rights and safety of the child throughout the investigation.

Children and community members with whom ERFA works will be provided with information about how to report any CP concerns about ERFA Staff, Partners and Associates.

### **8.1 Incident reporting FAQs**

ERFA appreciates that reporting a CP incident may be a difficult and sensitive situation. To assist ERFA Staff, Partners and Associates to correctly adhere to reporting procedures, the following helpful steps have been provided:



### **8.1.1 Who should report a suspected CP incident?**

- all ERFA Staff, Partners and Associates

### **8.1.2 What should be reported?**

- any disclosure or allegation regarding the safety, abuse or exploitation of a child;
- any observation or concerning behaviour that breaches ERFA's code of conduct for working with children;
- inappropriate use of the organisation's photographic equipment or computers including evidence of child pornography;
- Staff engaging in suspicious behaviour that could be associated with sexual exploitation or human trafficking.

### **8.1.3 When should an incident report be submitted?**

- Child abuse concerns should be raised immediately.

### **8.1.4 To whom should a CP incident be reported to?**

- Outside Australia: all child abuse reports should be made to the in-country CPO or Program Manager and to the ERFA CEO in Australia.
- Within Australia: all child abuse reports should be made to the Program Manager and to the ERFA CEO.
- ERFA CEO contact details:

<b>ERFA CEO contact for CP incident reporting</b>
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<a href="mailto:ceo@erf.org.au">ceo@erf.org.au</a> or +61 7 3621 9649
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### **8.1.5 How should it be reported?**

- verbally or by completing the Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Incident Reporting Form online at [www.erf.au/child-protection/](http://www.erf.au/child-protection/)

### **8.1.6 What will happen next?**

The ERFA CEO and/or Country Director in consultation with the CPO will discuss the allegations and then decide the next step. This will involve one or more of the following:

- interviewing the person/persons who made the allegations or other witnesses to gather more information with which to make a decision about the allegation;
- reporting to local police and/or a child protection authority when it is suspected or becomes clear that a crime has been committed;
- reporting to the Australian Federal Police when it is suspected or becomes clear that a crime has been committed regarding child sex tourism, child sex trafficking or child pornography;
- reporting to local child protection services as necessary;
- handling the concern internally if it is not a criminal matter;
- no further action;
- providing support to all stakeholders (including the reporter) as necessary.

## **8.2 Additional considerations for CP incident reporting**

### **8.2.1 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a key principle of reporting and managing child protection concerns. All information regarding a child protection concern must only be shared with the designated Program Manager or CPO. The names of people involved and the details of the report will remain confidential. Information will only be released on a "need to know" basis, or when required by Australian or overseas law, or when a report to police or child protection authorities is made.

### **8.2.2 Disciplinary action**

Disciplinary action will be taken against any Staff member who is discovered to:

- have failed to report a child protection concern;
- have intentionally made a false allegation;
- have made a serious breach of the CPP (minor breaches may result in action such as refresher training or increased supervision)

Disciplinary action may include the following sanctions:

- ERFA personnel: disciplinary action/dismissal;
- ERFA Partners: up to and including termination of all relations, including contractual and partnership agreements with ERFA;
- Associates: termination of an ongoing relationship;
- where relevant: reporting to authorities.

### **8.3 Additional recommendations for CP incident reporting**

#### **8.3.1 First responding to disclosure by a child**

When a child/young person tells you that he or she has been abused, they may be feeling scared, guilty, ashamed, angry and powerless. You, in turn, may feel a sense of outrage, disgust, sadness, anger and sometimes disbelief.

If a child discloses abuse, whatever the outcome, the child must be taken seriously.

It is important for you to remain calm and in control and to reassure the child/young person that something will be done to keep him or her safe.

When a child or young person's discloses they are being harmed you can show your care and concern for the child/young person by:

- listening carefully;
- telling the child/young person you believe him or her;
- telling the child/young person it is not their fault and he/she is not responsible for the abuse;
- telling the child/young person you are pleased he/she told you.

You will not be helping the child/young person if you:

- make promises you cannot keep, such as promising that you will not tell anyone;
- push the child/young person into giving details of the abuse. Your role is to listen to what the child/young person wants to tell you and not to conduct an investigation (beware of asking any leading questions as this may prejudice any subsequent investigation);
- indiscriminately discuss the circumstances of the child/young person with others not directly involved.

Try to obtain some details such as:

- where the abuse is taking place: at school, home, work etc.;
- whether it is currently occurring or did occur in the past;
- the name of the perpetrator.

It is possible that some children or young people will make a disclosure and then ask you not to tell anyone. It is important you seek guidance from the In-country CPO, Program Manager or equivalent and/or the ERFA Chief Executive Officer in Australia to discuss how the child or young person can be supported and the disclosure managed.

#### **8.3.2 Protecting the child**

Once an allegation is made there should be an immediate response that protects the child from further potential abuse or victimisation. The child may require medical assistance or counselling support. Where possible the child should remain in their place of residence or relevant program.

Exceptions may be made where the child is deemed to be at risk of victimisation by peers as a result of the allegation or because the alleged abuse has occurred in home-based care. If the child is in immediate danger you should make arrangements for the child to go to a safe place.

### **8.3.3 Distance the alleged perpetrator**

The best interest of the child may warrant the standing down of a Staff member. The Program Manager should advise their course of action in writing to the ERFA CEO. Any staff member stood down in this manner continues to receive full pay; this measure recognises that that the member is entitled to a just process that does not pre-judge guilt or innocence. Any volunteers who are stood down should similarly receive any reasonable reimbursement of costs.

## **9.0 Use of children’s images and video footage**

ERFA will at all times portray children in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way. Our guidelines on the use of children’s images and video footage are:

- A child should not be portrayed in a vulnerable or submissive manner.
- Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
- A child and their family must always be asked for consent when taking their images or video. When asking for consent to use the image or video, details should be given as to how and where the image/video might be used (such as in publications, in correspondence to donors, in reporting or in social media). The ERFA “Image Use Consent Form” should be completed where possible and returned to the CEO Executive Office – Brisbane, Australia.
- There should be no identifying information of the child connected with the location used in the publication of images or video footage.
- A story about an especially vulnerable child will not show their face or any other identifying factors.
- Children should be portrayed as part of their community, not in isolation.
- Children should not be portrayed as weak, isolated and vulnerable. Images/footage of children should portray them as resilient human beings and as partners in the development process.
- Local cultural traditions should be complied with regarding restrictions for reproducing personal images.
- Images/footage should be an honest representation of the context and the facts.
- When sending images/footage electronically, file labels should not reveal identifying information.
- All photographers/videographers should be screened for their suitability, including police checks where appropriate.

## **10.0 Youth participation**

ERFA is committed to actively encouraging the participation of the child and youth participation. ERFA expects programs to provide opportunities for children’s and young people’s views to be heard and incorporate their views into policies and programs.

Children will be asked for their feedback about Staff and ERFA’s services from time to time. Their feedback should be consulted by program Partners in the development and review of their CPP. Their feedback should also inform what is considered to be appropriate and inappropriate behaviours as contained in the Partner’s Code of Conduct. Children will also be informed about ERFA’s child abuse reporting process and who to contact if they are at risk, have been abused or are concerned about another child.

## **11.0 Child protection education**

ERFA is committed to educating Staff about this CPP, in particular, how to reduce risks and create child-safe environments. ERFA is committed to undertaking capacity building and training in CP with all Partners who work with us and facilitate programs that involve or affect children. ERFA also seeks to instill child-safe practices at every level of its organisation: this includes providing information about CP in the communities of ERFA programs.

## **12.0 Policy review**

ERFA's CPP will be reviewed every three years. ERFA's CEO will manage the review of the CPP. ERFA Staff, Partners, children and young people will be consulted to assist this process. Any changes made to the Policy will be signed off by ERFA management and the Board.

ERFA will review the individual CPPs of its Partners each year upon the submission of their Program Design and Funding Application. How a Partner implements its CPP will be monitored on a quarterly basis through scheduled acquittal reporting. Field monitoring and program visits will take place on a random basis as an additional measure to ensure CPP compliance.

## Child Protection Code of Conduct

Staff members and associates of ERFA are responsible for maintaining a professional role with children, which means establishing and maintaining clear professional boundaries that serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings or a violation of the professional relationship.

All staff and those associated with ERFA, its work and the programs it supports, should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their role as an ERFA representative and be a positive role model to children. ERFA has developed a Child Safe Code of Conduct to protect children, staff and the organisation by providing clear behavioural guidelines and expectations.

ERFA's Child Safe Code of Conduct includes:

### **I will**

- Treat all children and young people in ERFA partner program(s) with respect.
- Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent the values of ERFA.
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Respect cultural differences.
- Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers and have children and young people participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Report any concerns of child abuse.
- Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.
- Take responsibility for ensuring I am accountable and do not place myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made.
- Self-assess my behaviours, actions, language and relationships with children.
- Speak up when I observe concerning behaviours of colleagues or others.

### **I will not**

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children.
- Use inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes.
- Take children to my own home/hotel or sleep in the same room or bed as a child.
- Smack, hit or physically assault children.
- Develop sexual relationships with children or relationships with children that may be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Provide or supply of alcohol/drugs to children.
- Give gifts to children.
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child.
- Condone or participate in, behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children.
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.
- Deal with a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way.
- Seek to make contact and spend time with any child or young person outside program times.
- Use ERFA's computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras inappropriately, nor use them for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children.
- Hire minors as domestic labour.

## Child Protection Self-declaration

Edmund Rice Foundation Australia (ERFA) considers child abuse unacceptable in all circumstances and is committed to ensuring that all possible and necessary steps are taken to acknowledge the rights, and protect the wellbeing, of all children (a person under the age of 18 years) that we work with.

It is of utmost importance that abuse is not perpetrated nor compounded by those that ERFA puts in contact with children and in whom children place their trust. It is therefore essential that all staff, associates and representatives of ERFA understand their own role in protecting children and that all practical and reasonable steps are taken to counteract the risk of harm to children.

This self-declaration and agreement form relates to all individuals who come in to contact with children (in Australia and overseas) due to their relationship with ERFA.

Please read ERFA's *Child Protection Policy*. If necessary, seek clarification with an appropriate ERFA staff member and thereafter sign on this page to show you have understood and agree to abide by the contents outlined in these documents.

I (*your full name*)

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Of (*current address*)

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Declare that:

- I have been given a copy of, read and understand the ERFA Child Protection Policy including the CPP Code of Conduct.
- I agree to abide by the behaviour protocols and follow the reporting procedure set out in the ERFA Child Protection Policy and CPP Code of Conduct.
- I do not have a criminal record nor have undergone disciplinary action relating to forms of child abuse, neglect, or violence of any type.

I hereby agree to the conditions and guidelines set out by ERFA with regard to any contact with children in Australia and overseas as a result of an ERFA arranged activity. I understand that ERFA reserves the right to take legal action against me if I breach local or international child protection laws.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Procedure for Child Protection Incident Reporting			
No.		Key Points	Responsibility
<b>Part A: Incident Acknowledgement</b>			
1	Notification received (verbally or written)	<p>1.1 Any inappropriate behaviour of staff and/or associates of ERFA in respect of this policy must be formally reported and handled by the appropriate personnel.</p> <p>1.2 Acknowledge notification and assess the immediate safety of the child/ren concerned.</p> <p>1.3 Make and take the necessary immediate actions required ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the child/ren concerned.</p>	Staff / associate
<b>Part B: Incident Reporting</b>			
2.	Gather information and complete Incident Reporting Form.	<p>An incident can be reported verbally or in writing.</p> <p>2.1 A <a href="#">Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Incident Reporting Form</a> is required to be completed and submitted for any incidents, reports or concerns deemed inappropriate and harmful towards children by any staff or associate of ERFA.</p> <p>2.1 The reporting form is to be completed, signed and forwarded to:  <b>Chief Executive Office</b>  <b>PO Box 130</b>  <b>Virginia QLD 4014</b>  <b>Brisbane</b>  <b>PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL</b>  Or emailed to <a href="mailto:ceo@erf.org.au">ceo@erf.org.au</a></p>	Staff / associate
<b>Part C: Incident Received</b>			
3		<p>3.1 Incident report formally recorded and registered in the Incidents Complaints and Compliments Register (ICC Register).</p> <p>3.2 Formal acknowledgement note prepared and sent to the Advisee noted on the form.</p>	CEO

<b>Part C: Incident Management</b>				
4.		4.1 Incident will be reviewed and a basic assessment of severity will be conducted ascertaining if the incident is for internal action or is it to be referred to the Government Authorities. A. Internal Management B. External Referral	Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair	Within 1 day
	<b>A. Internal Management</b>	4.2 A full review and assessment of the incident details will take place which may or may not include: - confidential interview with the parties concerned - consultation with external expertise (where necessary) - consultation with Program Manager/Director (where necessary) 4.3 Pending the findings the appropriate disciplinary action will be undertaken. 4.4 Incident report form to be completed with action taken	CEO and Board Chair	Within 2 days
		4.5 ICC register to be updated and forwarded to Board of Directors for formal acknowledgement at the next meeting.	CEO Personal Assistant	Within 2 days
		4.6 Parties involved to be formally contacted advising action taken.  <b>Incident Closed</b>	CEO and Personal Assistant	Within 2 days
	<b>B. External Referral</b>	4.7 If the incident is deemed to be illegal it will be referred to the appropriate authorities for management. 4.8 Incident report form to be completed with action taken	CEO	Within 1 day
		4.9 Parties involved to be contacted advising action taken.	CEO	Immediately
		4.10 ICC register to be updated and forwarded to Board of Directors for formal acknowledgement at the next meeting.  <b>Incident Closed</b>	CEO Personal Assistant	



*[Below message to be inserted here in local language. Message to be displayed in both local language and English]*

## Child Protection Complaints

Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ for help if:

- you or someone you know is being hurt, harmed or treated badly
- you have a complaint or concern about this facility or someone who works here

Or, you can contact the funding partner, the Edmund Rice Foundation (Australia):



+61 7 3621 9649



[ceo@erf.org.au](mailto:ceo@erf.org.au)  
[www.erf.org.au](http://www.erf.org.au)